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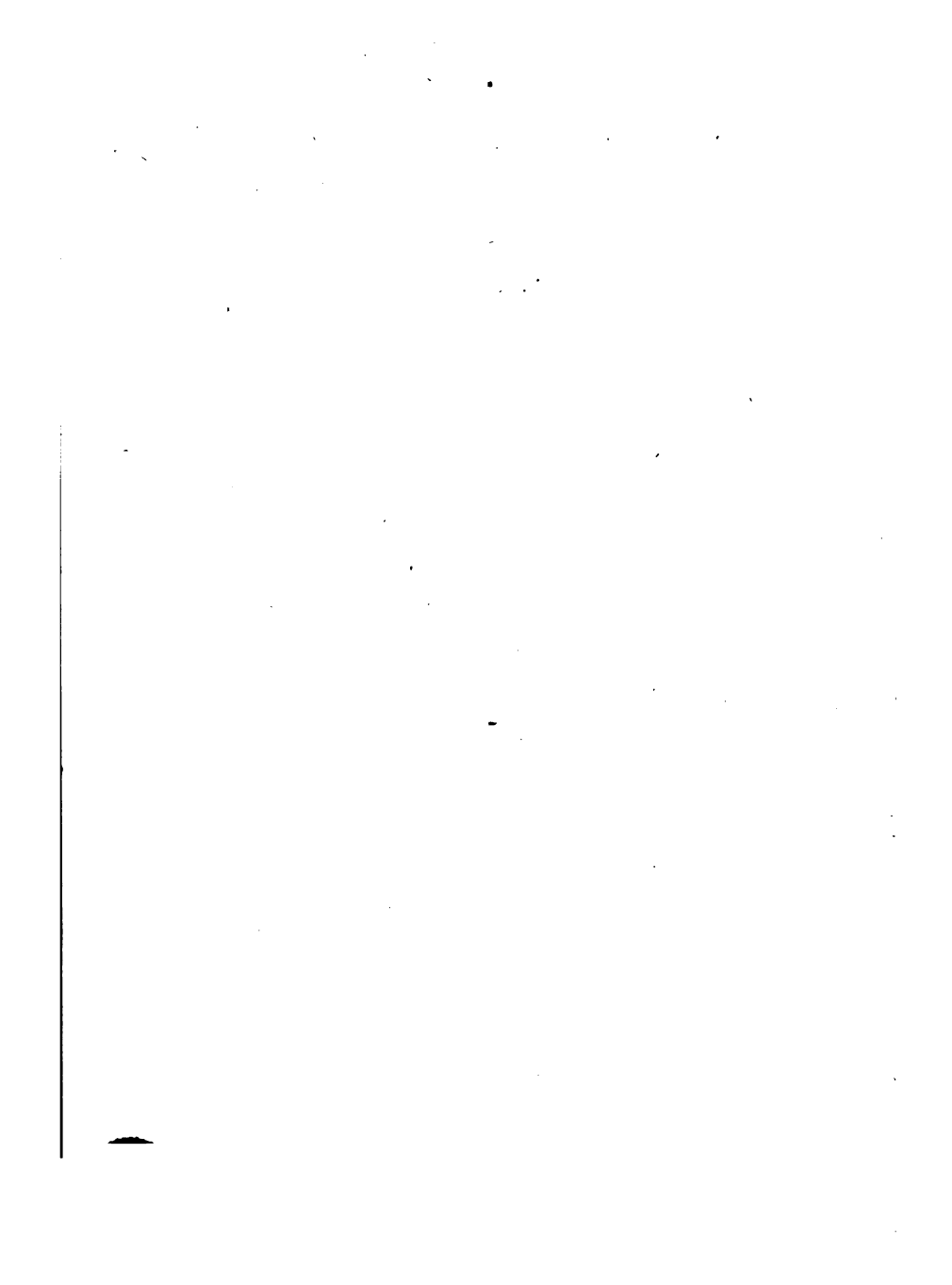
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SONGS OF AN
IDLE HOUR

BY
WILLIAM J COUGHLIN

*"Nothing resting in its own completeness
Can have worth or beauty: but alone
Because it leads and tends to further sweetness,
Fuller, higher, deeper than its own."*

PROCTER.

BOSTON:
A. WILLIAMS AND COMPANY.
Old Corner Bookstore.

MDCCCLXXXIII.

Entered according to Act of Congress, in the year 1882,

By WILLIAM J. COUGHLIN,

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PREFACE.

THE author imagines that he hears some practical friend ask why any one should, in this matter-of-fact day, devote time, which might be profitably given to business pursuits, in constructing verses which the general public may never think worth while to read; and others, out of curiosity, inquire who this might be that now rushes into the arena, seeking encounter with well-trained intellectual gladiators.

To the first, he says, that in ignorance of any law defining one's mode of recreation, he has spent the IDLE HOURS of an active life in watching the peculiar antics of the impractical, the winged steed, Pegasus; and if unconsciously he has done wrong, he fully acknowledges the crime, but not the intent, and asks, but begs not, to be forgiven.

To the second, he would reply, that no pretension is made to talent to entitle the author to stand upon the very lowest round, even, of the literary ladder; and he aspires not to comparison with even the very least of his contemporaries. Nor at this time had he dared make this venture, were it not for the constant promptings of those whose judgment he values, who, having read his occasional verses in literary journals, insisted upon

having these estrays sheltered in some more permanent abode. To the newspapers and magazines, too, which so kindly copied and gave currency to these efforts, he holds himself under special obligations.

Some few pieces in this collection were written between the author's fifteenth and twentieth years, and appeared at the time in the corners of newspapers. This is his only apology for printing them in this volume, with their more or less pretentious companions.

In the hope that the *reader* will deal leniently with faults and shortcomings, and that these efforts may not be received as entirely ink-stains and blemishes, he commits this book to the public, and awaits,

Not indifferently, its verdict.

THE AUTHOR.

LOWELL, MASS., *Nov.* 18, 1882.





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U K E R .

A P O E M I N T W O C A N T O S .

CANTO I.

THROUGH Winter's cold, and Summer's fiery heat,
Ambition ceaseless knocked upon my door,
And many a tale of glory would repeat, —
Of ended toil and pleasures evermore,
For such as menial walks resign for shady groves of lore.

The siren, pointing, whispered, "Be not blind;
See yonder mountain fairer than the Hill
Of Olivet or Horeb, there thou 'lt find
Fair dwelling, where not cares nor fangs of ill
From Envy's bursting sac shall poisoned drop instil.

"There mayest thou stand and gaze serene afar,
Alone in peace the idol of thy kind,
Into the vale where mortals warring are
For bread or fame, that leprosy of mind, —
From birth anigh until to dust they are consigned."

"Fair in the eye looms Glory's mount," I said;
"But see what ledgy barriers gird her waist:
If Fame's abode lie round about its head,
I would as lief the nectared cup not taste,
As court so coy a maid in altitude so chaste.

“ I love the toiling multitude too well,—
The humble soldiers of the rank and file,
Who in their lowly homes unhonored dwell ;
These are the kings with whom I ’d live the while,
Not gilded pawns that strut in oligarchic style.

“ If I obey, and thou wouldst serve me, teach
Me not to seek what Providence denies ;
Fruit may be golden far beyond the reach, —
The stream no higher than its source can rise ;
Who ’d spurn the lowly born ’s a villain in disguise.”

As glides the ready manned and freighted craft,
Slowly, the test to prove of helm or sail,
The ballast’s balance, or the depth of draught,
Before she seek the open sea and gale, —
So would I test my muse ere I begin my tale.

A man must have some pedigree, be born
To golden shoes or brazen cheek, to hold
An honest head above the ruck, for scorn
Is Genius’ dower, whose luck is lack of gold :
In country’s cause my father fell,—that’s all the claim I hold.

I felt the glow of action in my youth ;
And when my tools were laid away, I sought
The Helicon whence well the springs of truth,
Imbued with man’s sublimest gems of thought,
And in my humble way I felt for man and wrought.

Misfortune bore me over many a land,
Till, anchored in my old New England home,

I joined the Alpha's reportorial band,
And like Diogenes, or ghostly gnome,
In news' quest at night the city's walks I'd roam.

To pauper dens, and crime, and shame, and plague,
And lordly homes of luxury and pride,
Where strange event transpired, or rumor vague
Mouthéd stale truths or in cold malice lied,
With ready pencil there I wandered argus-eyed.

A crimson chain of crime had late been forged
In the lone suburbs of the busy town ;
In mystery shrouded, clewless, horror gorged,
Like some grim wraith from Mars' red lap swung down,
Or Leonardo reptile-head at mortal skill afrown.

The city's lonesome, but at night the waste
Outskirting to the margin of the bay,
Of all the lonesome places God hath placed
To cower the soul of man, this bears the sway,
Through which at duty's call I took my solitary way.

At every angle in the road my hand
Instinctively my Smith-and-Wesson sought ;
Of bloody bandit, gore-stained dirk in hand,
And all the patriarchs of crime I thought :
With such a murderous vapor all the place was fraught.

Here, on the road, the vomit of the sea
Lay putrid, and th' offensive sewer gas
From the great city floated foul and free,
Discoloring so the blades of wiry grass,
That hungry kine forbear to crop it as they pass.

Well idleness and want might here unite
Their ragged forces, riot here, and base,
Seditious mutineers and traitors find a bight,
Safe from law's hand and justice's calm face,
Within this untilled, ugly, squalid, barren place.

If some new Hercules would rise and sweep
These Ægean fens away which hem us round,
His fame were matchless, cities hourly weep
O'er those death-sinks that at their feet are found ;
But destined to exist whilst mighty marts abound.

At such a time and place burst on my sight
A vision fair as Magis' guiding star ;
Through the dark, dismal curtain of the night
Fell on my ear a strain like fiends at war, —
And one red lance of light illumed the plain afar.

And from the marsh uprose a fabric grand,
Of starry splendor decked ; its golden dome
Bolstered on jasper pillows, on each hand
Ranged marbles far surpassing those of Rome :
Proud mortal he, with right to call such place his home.

Its massive façade facing in the road,
In eve of age, two beings were engaged
With slight success in lifting a great load ;
Their hard and vexéd looks showed hearts enraged ;
But when I nearer drew their passion seemed assuaged.

Thus hailing me, the elder of the two, —
“ Stranger, wilt lend our puny force thine aid ?
Our sack to-night hath baffling heft undue,

This girth thou 'lt please to take,—be not afraid.”
And in the Palace hall the burden soon was laid.

The silence-breaker was a man of height
And huge proportions, big of chest and hip :
A giant Ajax, cast in flask of might,
With wolfish eyes and broad distended lip :
As reed were Theseus' club within his brawn hand's grip.

The mute, his comrade, was of stature small,
Wiry and gaunt, and crippled in his limbs,
With dwarfish eyes diminutive where all
The red corroding rust of fiendish whims,
And jealousy might browse within their iris rims.

The burden on the floor by latent force
Internally seemed troubled, and I heard
Commingling voices low, and deep, and hoarse,
Abortive curses like, if that I erred :
My bent of mind was guessed and knowledge thus deferred.

“ 'T was ever thus,” he spoke, “ the old way o'er ;
The stork would float as well 's the webbed swan,
And 'all would fly, and flying, seek to soar ;
Thus hath it been since this old world began :
Of all the soaring tribe the fool supreme is man.

“ All seek the upper current, the extremes ;
The prince an emperor would be, the priest
A bishop, and the briefless lawyer dreams
Of bench and ermine, and the very least
Of mortals will aspire to head a royal feast.

"All is contention ; but, good sir, I-fain
Would recompense your favor ; enter there ;
Good Jeal, some nectar ; to your mind again
I would recall your midnight mission here.
In quest of news thou art, as plainly doth appear."

The room was spacious, furnished in the style
Egyptian old, mosaic gold the floor,
Corinthian brass the candelabra, while
A sphinx's head frowned from each olive door ;
And all the panels round Olympian etchings bore.

Some scientific instruments well known
To old astrologers, an ancient chart
Of human frailties, whereupon were shown
The links which bind the forces, mind and heart,—
These, these were there, and tools unknown in mortal art.

From the corona of the cornice high
Large opal lustre mirrors slanting hung,
Which from the hidden coigns of earth and sky
Their holiest secrets tore and deftly flung
On a marmoreal scroll, of beauty yet unsung.

Thereon I read the story of the crime
The culprits saw in their foul, fiendish act ;
The long-sought clew was found, and in short time
Made record of, not one detail I lacked,—
O happy felt I then my papers sealed and backed.

"That to the press," the master, "thou'ldst convey ;
My page will bear it thither. Jeal, attend ;

Betake thee on this errand *sans* delay,
Whilst I essay to entertain our friend,
For pleasure's mortals' aim as happiness's the end."

"Goods thou discardest, or I much mistake ;
This well-worn table and these brazen stools
Small pleasure know," I said ; " but labors make
Thee master of such sciences, whose rules
In life's short span can scarce be primed in the schools."

Then he, " Thou 'ldst mock my simple gifts ; to fate
Whose slaves we are, what ages past have wrought,
The grain of sand, and the tall mountain great,
And every deed belong, and unborn thought,
Drink we," and to the lip the honied cups were brought.

"Thou marvel'st, man, and well thou might'st, whose eye
Encounters thine to-night in this strange place ;
To mortal few 't is given to espy
Me as I am, though all the human race
Unknown have often met me viewless face to face.

"Uker, my name ; I hold the mystic keys
To human hopes and wishes, Joy and Pain,
Which I distribute when and where I please,
Howe'er my supreme pleasure may ordain.
Some parts thou may'st observe if thou wilt yet remain.

"Deem me not chief, nor think that I create.
Those gods that crucify your kind on earth,
The offspring they of one in loftier state,
Left at my door to place in final berth,
Some in bereaved homes, and some in courts of mirth.

“ My task awaits me now ; if thou’ldst behold
The secret forces, stay, which shake the spheres ;
Thou hast true metal, brave thou art and bold,
Scenes shalt thou see of agony and tears,
Unseen of blooming youth or man in wealth of years.”

The snake-eyed Jeal with slow salaam recame,
And squat his puny figure on the floor ;
His master spoke, and in a burst of flame
The caged imps broke loose with such uproar,
As mortal soul undamned hath ne’er perceived before.

Then Uker waved his wand, and forth Crime bent
Into the night made hideous by the rout ;
They rolled their ghoulish shapes and crawling went
To various stations portioned round about,
Gorging the humid air with fumes and hellish shout.

Black wrecks of curses met them on the waves
Of naked, lean, iconoclastic shapes
That frantic prey on silent, sainted graves,
And prowl o’er docks, and headlands, and far capes,
From whose cold, calloused lips no breath of hope escapes.

In one vast countless chorus loud they sang,
Like th’ echoed death-voice of artillery,
Accompanied of zell and timbrel clang,
A mad response to pagan litany,
Of which my mind retained but this unchristian glee.

Touch thy harp, O Chiron !
Voice this chord alone, —

We are gods of Iron,
They are myths of Stone.

Roll the ages by us
Like a chariot-race ;
Dare they thus defy us,
Floating fronds of space?

We are not the crazy
Zealots of the cross,
Nor the Moolid lazy
Juggling fools of Joss.

Gods of gold we fashion,
Lords of men they make,
Every spume of passion
For a god they take.

Age enriched of science,
Age of Godless creed,
Lustrum of self-reliance,
Glorious in deed.

Years, and days, and minutes
Bind we into sheaves,
Creeds, and laws, and tenets
Scatter we as leaves.

Sound the zell, O Chiron !
Sing this song alone, —
We are gods of Iron,
They are myths of Stone.

Then silence fell, more painful than the noise.
Spake Uker thus: "Thou of the mortal mould,
Bow not thy will 'neath Fear's base counterpoise;
Such are but serfs at my desire controlled.
Awake! the cause awaits in which we are enrolled."

At which a city roundabout us spread
In gorgeous panorama, stretching wide,
The fruit of gold, and sweat of ages dead,
And unannounced we stood, unseen, beside
The downy couch of one expiring in his pride.

A hoary minister of God in prayer;
A blooming boy, and, too, the widowed wife,
Who beautiful in teary eyes knelt near,
Her mobile bosom pulsing, as the knife,
Keen-edged, of death, transfixed the potent cord of life.

And he lay dead, the father true and fond,
The honest husband, and the faithful friend;
His soul on wings of shadow borne beyond
The ken of man, his body to find end
Within the gruesome grave, with parent clay to blend.

As Psyche fair, the wife, if beauty breathes,
In perfect form of frame, and limb, and face,
And faultless breast enshrined in snowy wreaths,
Tinted of pink; and sylphic limpid grace
Of motion, and sweet eyes, which languid lids encase.

My sense enravished did banquet on
This bounteous feast of beauty, widowed,

And from the mother wheeling towards the son
 Dark clad, methought his eye my passion chid,
 And I my sin wished 'neath the roots of ocean hid.

O, woman! in whose hands the shuttled woof
 And seized warp of destiny recline;
 Man, thou wert lost, had she stood not aloof,
 And tied in tangling snarls the passions' line,
 Or by an eye-flash checked thee in each dream-design.

A sneer sardonic plowed the cheeks of Jeal
 In circling furrows. Uker spake, and smiled.
 "If grief ye think the tears shed there reveal,
 Thou'rt sure by woman's witchery beguiled.
 What fire of sorrow's here lies smould'ring in yon child.

"See how by stealth the insane hypocrite
 The chamber enters where the Venus waits,
 His amorous eyes surcharged with wile unfit
 To rove in rosy bowers of the Fates,—
 Such wrong your primal parents' sin subordinates.

"Mark where the gold-fringed arras trembling fall;
 There in the gloomy recess, just apart,
 See the flame-glaring socket and red ball
 Of baleful eye. Ha! note the agile dart!
 As sheeny poignard's drove and pluck'd and plung'd in heart.

"And he, the orphaned matricide, is fled,
 Leaving his victims wallowing in gore,
 To lip the crimson tale when years are sped,
 And plant reproach where honor bloomed before,—
 A fugitive atramp along life's jagged shore.

"We tracked his vagrant, wandering footprints far,
Eluding justice, Godless, homeless, wild,
A leader of the filthy tribes that war
On social form, he sneaks, a wretch, that child,
Who, whilom cherub seemed, so fair, so pure, so mild.

"We loose him, now, awhile amid the throng,
To meet him later in his mad career
Of baffled infamy, deceit, and wrong,
Approaching that one certainty, the bier,
Which youth imagine far, but yet, alas! how near.

"Next!" roared the sombre Uker, and the scene
Shifted, and I stood in awe before
A suicide's grim corpse, and asked, "What mean
This untimed act, and luxury and store
Of wealth, untold, abounding. Tell me, I implore?"

"A fool, of course," said Uker; "all the race
Are purblind fools, distinctionless. He came
Of Saxon stock, whose aim is pride of place;
The pride he had, and the honors he would claim
In kingdoms that cohere with title, rank, and fame.

"Pelham, his name; he rose from naught by fraud
Yclept smartness, into social circles, high,
And wealth amassed till in his sight stood awed
Great minds, whose names are stars in history,
The latches of whose shoes he was not fit to tie.

"Fat offices he bid for and obtained;
For gold all doors unlocks, his heart's desire,
That throned king o'er our republic, reigned,

And wealth ennobled, such he'd have transpire,
And they base helots be, who toil in sweat, for hire."

"Such brood," I said, "as rot our nation's thought,
Are safest dead. Like Pharaoh's hungry kine,
That ate their fellows, they would make onslaught
On the producing millions' flesh, to line
Their craws, and bristling roll like prickly porcupine.

"When usurpation robs this land of right,
And Cæsar leaps triumphant to his car,
Ten thousand Brutus' arms will shine in might
To sheath their daggers in his vitals far:
For satrap ne'er shall reign where free-born millions are.

"The blood and iron oligarch who seeks
A footstool on the shoulders of the free
Shall find it dead, where outraged franchise wreaks
Just vengeance swift. I fear not tyranny
Till brain, and blood, and muscle, move in shadow mockery."

"A patriot," said Uker; "such fine talk
Oft have I heard from stalwart, lusty men,
Who in the hour of trial, like the hawk
At sight of scare-crow, cower back again,
And hire an humble man to shield them there and then.

"Thou mightst not act so; but enough: the cause
Of this clown's ignominious end thou'ldst know?
Much gold and honors had he, and the applause
Of fawners, who with tide of fortune flow—
Spit-lickers unto wealth, and cormorants of woe.

“ Of noble blood was Pelham ; in his mind,
Escutcheon, shield, and blazoned coat-of-arm,
And all the paraphernalia, which combined
Add lustre unto knighthood, and encharm
The upstart spawn, and please the parasitic swarm.

“ He would possess, unmindful of the cost,
And had true copies reproduced of those
Of his old ancestors, but long-time lost,
Since that fierce British feudal war of Rose,
Or Roses, which of numerous titles did dispose.

“ Armorial bearings got he, whereupon .
This golden motto blazed on azure field,
‘Je le tiens,’ and all the trappings shone
Of his establishment, all gold annealed :
There every quaint device which handicraft revealed.

“ Liveried laquays, thorough-blooded steeds,
Richly caparisoned, whilst the humbler stock
Bear sign fire-branded, which the rapt eye leads
To curious notice, and the gates unlock
Of thought which flunky aspirations erst would block.

“ Last eve, within his mansion’s spacious hall,
The *élite* of his tribe did congregate ;
Beauty, and wealth, and bravery, and all
The upper-tendom of this cultured state,
In gayety had met, his luck to celebrate.

“ A feast select it was, where etiquette,
Polished and stately, guarded word and act,

The mazy waltz and sober minuet
Felt its subduing, nice, despotic tact,
And pure spontaneous glee the whole occasion lackt.

“ To Pelham’s wealth the guests rare gifts did add,
More numerous than that argosy of old
Great Homer sings of in his Iliad,
Some worth and use esteemed, and some pure gold
Of intellect, envolumed, purged of filth and mold.

“ And one old book this mischief was the cause,
Its golden title, ‘ Hobbs on Heraldry,’
Which taught the names, the mottoes, and the laws,
And every shade of rank, and each degree,
Through which a British peer might trace his pedigree.

“ His thanks expressed the host, and thus did speak :
‘ Within the bosom of this tome enshrined,
My name doth lie ennobled ; let us seek
Back through the groves of knighted names, and find
The crystal fount from which my stream of blood doth wind.’

“ With nervous touch he turned the tinted leaves,
And an admirer, soldier-breeded, tasked
The page to read. The warrior proud unreaves
The glamoured robes, wherein the splendor basked,
Till Pelham, boasted name, ghost-naked stood unmasked.

“ Some vagrant blushes lit on rougéd cheek
Of pampered ladies haughty, and the youths
Embryo laughter smothered, ere it speak ;
And Pelham shrunk enraged and shamed at Truth’s
Bright sock of light which plows pretension to its roots.

“The foremost bearer of the name was son
Of royal prince begot of maid unwed,
A common wench, — thus did the legend run.
Illicit born of sin-defiled bed :
Such was the tale from Hobbs the doughty warrior read.

“This unexpected turn a damper put
On pleasantry ; the recent royal host
Shivered with shame sheer through from head to foot,
To see his glory vanish, when he most
Of ancestry desired with honored right to boast.

“Like Laocoön of monster reptiles crushed,
Shame wound him round and every fibre smote ;
The prey of frenzied scandal's tongue unhushed,
He laid his vandal hand upon his throat,
For well he knew such poison has no antidote.

“Nor marvel at such denouément, for you
May trace the blood of every lord alive
To brutal lust unblest of grace nor dew
Of pure alliance, worse than beasts connive
They godless ; and this spawn must lead mankind or drive.

“O man ! be grateful for thy humble lot,
Where virtue ever found a home, and where
No taint of shame thy white escutcheon blot,
Of honest birthright brighter than the glare
Of titled things, thy crown shall loom beyond compare.

“A truce to Tragedy ; the undersprings
That color life in all its spiral grooves,
Are rampant now in wild comminglings,

Which heedlessly your fallen race approves,
That witnesses we be our purport now behooves.

“ Here stands the entrance to the Gorgon Hall ;
Tell the inscribéd characters of fire
Intrenched against the massive outer wall,
‘ The Place of Angels,’ while within the pyre
The Devil’s Den were name more meet for haunt so dire.

“ The portals of thine eyeballs rend ajar,
The turbid veils which round thy senses swirl ;
Go tear, the more the shreds, the less the mar
To pure intelligence, that priceless beryl,
As pivot stand, so all creation round thee whirl.

“ If that thou canst unprejudiced observe
The sights I now may open to your gaze ;
Be sure true honor every impulse nerve,
Behold the gorgeous spectacle, which lays
Its tributary spheres in fiery swaths ablaze.

“ Honey of sound, sweet music, fills the air,
And blithesome maidens gayly ope the dance ;
A myriad shapely graces cherub fair,
Pure guardian angels, fill the high expanse ;
Virtue’s forlorn hope yet uncalled to advance.

“ Forth rush in winding file a mingled force
Of sex succeeding innocence, their tread
Far lighter than their leaden hearts indorse,
Dissemblance Demon’s wing is round them spread,
And each ennobling sense of mind and heart is dead.

“ In sensual bond delicious to the base,
They swing their drowsy forms sinuous round,
And libid arms pink, naked breasts encase,
When all in one entangling reel are wound ;
Dark thoughts misshapen rise, which heaven’s host astound.

“ A school of slimy things crawl round their feet,
Lizards, and cobras, and the deadly brood
Of snaky vipers from each vile retreat,
And coil their limber joints, their lips unglued,
At sight of fresh food gloating they the revellers pursued.

“ Lowered the spirit faces, duteous they
In order meet for angels slowly drooped,
And round their ward’s weak heads their weapons play,
A phalanx of the sheeniest spheres e’er grouped,
Since Michael led the higher rank in battle ’ray atrooped.

“ At one green, grimy monster’s master nod,
In carnival beczazed conglomerate,
Creation’s triune, reptile, man, and God,
And two unite the third to execrate,
And spit their spume on Him in fierce envenomed hate.

“ The sainted vanquished fled the bestial things,
Which o’er their victims crawl in spiral folds,
Their eyes like emeralds, set in asphalt rings —
Scaly and glutinous, of filthy molds,
Such imps as th’ orb infernal constantly beholds.

“ Their bestial actions, now, my soul benumbed ;
Sip they the red blood from nude milkless breasts,

Which ne'er hath felt the press of velvet gum
Of infant, there no baby forehead rests,
Nor ever will, for vipers shall be hence their guests.

"Now mothers' labor-pangs succumb before
The withering march of pleasure's monitor,
Expediency, and grounded in the lore
Of computation, which the pure abhor, —
Kneel each before its god a lewd idolator.

"Accursed whose unnatural barrenness
Produceth not the sinews nor the thews
That stand a nation in its sore distress!
And vital fire into its veins infuse, —
Base eunuchs all, who God's supremest gifts abuse.

"Malarial deserts which absorb the sun,
And alchemize in filth its golden yield,
Their hearts. The task appointed unbegun,
For heaven's sweet dew has fallen on stubble field,
And sinks to festered roots too rotten to be healed.

"O land devoid of spring-time! think of Gaul
In that old day when the barbarian housed
His steeds within her kingdom's capital,
And in the holiest fanes uncurbed caroused,
And be thy virtuous soul from lethargy aroused.

"Chew they the quid saline of bitterness
Those gnomes misnated in their latest hour,
That do this thing, e'en living pale distress
From their cold flaccid features grim doth lower,
And all the livelong day they tremble in its power.

“ And even night, which locks the flangéd doors
Of thought in inky caverns of the brain
Harbors, not thèirs, it floats round tombéd shores
Of misery, self-bonded, to remain
Through youth, and age, all time, a fiery breathing pain.

“ Met every day like exhumed ghouls with eyes,
Sunken and glazéd, timorous of sight
Of nobler manhood, deft in subtleties
Stamped with the tarréd brand Herodite,
Their calloused hearts incrustéd with dead sense of right.”

CANTO II.

DUMB Jeal, in his own element, felt glad,
Or seemed to feel, while Uker stood demure,
And motioned me to note amid the mad,
Wild surging seas of passions, which allure,
A youth, whose parts more worthy comrades might procuré.

Observe how on a dais raised he stands,
His listeners charming with the tuneful notes
Which fall in cadences, as silvern strands
Of song entwined gushed from a thousand throats,
And this, the rune which on the waves of midnight floats.

Daughters of the laughing moon,
Fair and frail, or full of vigor,
Yield we now to joy, nor soon
Shall our blissful buds be strewn

On the pave
Of the grave,
Where the whirling cyclones rave,
And the wilting rhyme of age
Ever merciless doth rage
In its rigor.

Sons of pleasure, yours the treasure
Of a happiness complete.
Be ye wise,
Recognize,
That the suns of life in flitting fast and fleet
Have emitted mellow rays
On your golden, happy days,
And your nights were passing Thracian nectar sweet.

Fools may cavil; mocking hollow
At our innocent delight,
But no child of great Apollo
Shall their squeamish voicings follow, —
We defy them day and night.

Sisters, brothers, fond beloved,
Of one grand fraternity,
Now in fellow-feeling glov'd,
Clasp the hand in amity.
Let not jealousy nor malice
Welcomed roam within our palace,
Thus we'd quaff of pleasure's chalice
To eternity.

Raise your voices, one and all,
Let sweet strains of music roll,
Till they gild this circling ball
With true poesy of soul.

CHORUS.

We are Pleasure's children, we
Found the sylphid sleeping
In beechen woods beside the sea,
Where the waves are weeping.

We decked her temples round with bays,
And flecked her hair with flowers,
Which bloom when breath of night low lays
Their leaves 'neath dewy showers.

Her waist we zoned with braided hair,
Clipped from her long locks flaxen,
And kissed her lips and cheeks, so rare,
Of pink, transparent, waxen.

Then bore her in our arms away,
'Neath shady boughs of holly,
And worship since our lovely fay,
The crownéd queen of folly

In temples which the Orient beam
Surpass in gorgeous splendor,
Where songs outflow in endless stream,—
A choral triumph tender.

The fair and brave, the young and old,
Are incense ever bringing
In sacrifice within the fold,
To serve the censer, swinging.

All rulers of the land and wave
Supinely bow before her,
And anchorites with cross and stave
In secresy adore her.

On every rood of earth to her
Are votive altars standing,
While blood in passion's veins shall stir,
She'll reign in right commanding.

While heart shall throb at touch of lip,
And bird the dew of morning
From rose, or lily leaf, shall sip,
Shall she preside adorning.

Then brim with joy the luscious cup,
Nor longer stay dilating,
Else some fair Circe quaff it up
Whilst we are listless waiting."

"A jolly lot, by Jove!" quoth I; "can you
Distinguish, Master, in this scene but joy—
These sentiments sweet spoken, are they true
Bright ore, or baser metal in alloy, —
Mere paste unreal which a sun-test might destroy?"

“Well, as to this,” quoth Uker, “one might say
They’re true, and as some doctrine-teachers throw
The light of their dark lantern on the way,
Their ignorant, benighted flocks do go,
And laugh their sleeves within, that they no better know.

“But I had rather nurse the naked truth,
When facts the navel-strings of knowledge cut,
Than sweet deception train, howe’er astute,—
Far better keep the oral organs shut,
And choke the bidden lie, than travel in such rut.”

“There is no pleasure here, but slimy ooze,
And essences of misery guilt-dressed;
And yon gay youth that kings this gay carouse,
So seemingly of pleasure’s god possessed,
Of all this wretched train at heart is most depressed.

“His happiness is outward, just a mask
To hide the unclean, festering flesh beneath,
Deceiving none accustomed to the task
Of peering ’neath the character’s frail sheath,—
His gayety-gemmed brow with pleasure I’ll unwreath.

“In indolence that’s rarely virtuous,
This wayward youth, of promise great, was bred;
On beauteous female shapes voluptuous,
Unnumbered, hath his eye in dalliance fed,—
A gay Lothario he, by far too wise to wed.

“Three summers back, beside Assalio Lake,
Where city merchants pitch vacation tent,

This youth, Jean Arno, did acquaintance make
With winsome girls, whose hearts his arts indent,
And one the folly of that time most sorely did repent.

“Sole daughter she of one esteemed ‘on change,’
The darling and the idol of her sphere,
Till Arno did her trustful soul derange,
And poison poured into her yielding ear, —
Which of she drank till ruin smirched her bright career.

“Her parents’ chamber seeking in the night,
With faltering step and bleeding heart she pressed
Her coral lips to theirs, more gently light
Than downy robin drops upon its nest, —
Disturbing not their peaceful, sweet, grace-hallowed rest.

“Then softly trod the slow-descending stair
Which led to degradation, death, and shame;
The door behind her closed, and waiting there
A flood of recollections o’er her came,
Too tender for a cynic tongue like mine to name.

“Nature’s strong ties were severed, and she felt
In full the heft of all her erring course,
Her guilt red wound her round a sinuous belt
Of lurid flame, fed fattening on remorse;
For will was all too weak to stem its torrent force.

“She found a home with strangers; lily hands,
Unused to toil, at weary labor wrought,
And all day through she at her loom commands
The shuttle’s motion, turning threads to cloth;
Now priceless dear, indeed, her sustenance is bought.

“ Six dreary months she answered to the bell,—
The blood-benumbing bell, that tells the hour
The factory folk within an earthly hell
Must stand atremble in the eye of power,
Which through the golden doors of wealth on her doth lower !

“ Few knew her history, fewer cared to know ;
She was not of them, but an aspen pale
Transplanted to a brake where thistles grow,
Which of their sturdy honest natures hale,
They make the waif appear still more exceeding frail.

“ Thus secretly her days filed into space,
Until, unable longer to uphold
Her share of taxing labor, quit her place,
And kept her winter chamber, chilly cold,
E'en dreading her, her recent workmates should behold.”

“ Ling'ring at night for morn ; at morn, for death ;
Slowly deployed the agonizing days ;
Yet to inquiry never giving breath
Of blame, nor names in accent of dispraise,
Nor lisps a sound that Arno's perfidy betrays.

“ Some kindly words she had, while hid behind
Wild rampant rose the poison-laden thought,
Which oily tongue can never wholly blind ;
In silence, patient, she the fierce feud fought
Till death ; for kindness was with healing balm unfraught.

“ When Nature's work hath blemish, human touch
But rots the flesh, or scarifies the bone ;
When woman of deceit hath suffered much,

Compassion seems to change her heart to stone ;
As if died not the Christ her errors to atone.

“ But yesterday, within the Potter’s Field,
Was laid her hemlock coffin in the clay,
Which soon from mortal eye its prey concealed,
And no one wept, and no one knelt to pray,
For friend and kindred then were far from there away.

“ Thou’rt sure mistaken, Uker ; parents’ hearts
Are not so flinty hard as not to feel
The sympathetic bond which blood imparts, —
Stood these not there, in robes of woe, to steal
A parting look, and wing to God a last appeal ? ”

Thus spoke I ; and he muttered, “ Be not crazed ;
Society would suffer branch and root,
The shame in every parlor would be blazed,
And Slander’s tongue pursue them as a brute :
They knew their place, they hold it, and are mute.

“ Her babe survives, and shall, and yet his name
Shall shine in opal splendor o’er his peers,
For impulse is ingrafted firm on shame,
And energy, o’erbounding braggarts’ jeers,
Each barrier layeth prone which in life’s path uprears.

“ Nurse not the dream that cynic Arno’s soul
Is dead to qualms of conscience ; Nature yet
Has never loosed a grip in its control,
Though pleasure-gloating now, this awful debt
By Fate’s eternal protest must be squarely met.

Behold yon lovely maiden, lily decked
In flowery robes of snowy whiteness gay,
Her feet to music tripping lightly, wrecked
In health is she, the hectic blushes play
'Pon cheeks that fain would hide the impress of decay.

" Her buoyant heart and blithesome mien are lies,
Dissolved in daylight, when in torture's claws,
Like leaf she 'll shiver when the north wind cries,
In recognance of death which closer draws ;
That horror-boding thought, her being's soul o'erawes.

" And numerous other thoughtless wights are here
In chase of pleasure, doomed to untimed graves ;
Wasting the brightest light of life's career,
Frail wanton things, of passion shackled slaves ;
Inactive, unambitious, — flotsam on life's waves.

" Enough of this deception, raw and red
And choking with effluvia of guilt ;
Hence every moral instinct's surely fled,
This place for Satan's dupes is nicely built ;
Depart we hence. I go with thee, where'er thou wilt."

We traversed stony squares, deserted, dark,
Save where the moonbeams slept diagonal,
Which at the troubled watch-dogs bay and bark ;
From out the shadows, nearing, lazy, crawl
Black noiseless moving wains along the latticed mall.

" What ghostly caravan is this ? " I asked,
" Which hugs the corpse of midnight silently ;

These muffled, hooféd steeds, and drivers masked —
Not sure engaged in honest industry?"
"Thou'rt eared and eyed," spake Uker; "soon thou 'lt
hear and see."

It halted in the sloping yard, behind
A modern mansion, cupola'd and spired;
Its cargo to the owners when consigned,
Disorderly unmasked, they swift retired;
By aid of light new born, I saw what then transpired..

The source of light approaching nearer, held
My mind in bondage, and I stood spell-bound;
And who might not? — for from eye-sockets welled
Sightless of skeletons, green, globy, round,
The phosphorescent rays which in the place abound.

I recognized the phalanx of the marsh;
Their captain they salute, as in review
They move to manual orders grating harsh,
With blazing optics ever bent askew, —
Limning the edifice from dome to basement through.

Limp hoisting tackle slipped through oiléd blocks,
Noiseless, sheer down from dormer-window high,
And weighted midway rising sways and rocks,
Strained every strand and lowered by and by
Till all the freight is sheltered safe from prying eye.

The ghostly lights had vanishéd, erect
Enhoused we stood within the charnel kiln,
Where dead were ranged in order to dissect,
From which arose such stench as hell might fill
With force to motionize a plague-creating mill.

A centaur crowd, fierce man-brutes, bare of arm,
In hieroglyphic-figured robes berayed,
Glad-eyed lounged here, as if the secret charm
Expressed, of all the essence of their trade,
And toil, and effort, was before their vision laid.

Professors, staid physicians, students, quacks ;
Make-shifts of nature, weaned before their time
Of reason's milk, designed to swing the axe,
To plow the fields, or free the streets of slime ;
Here mind-diseased aspire great Galen's heights to climb.

Democrites, blind patron of the craft,
Most wisely said, all living things are mad ;
But man methinks is so entirely daft,
His reclamation's scarcely worth a brad, —
The verge of his course obtains from good to bad.

The weed narcotic, solace of my gloom,
In filthy mouths of all was here abused,
And umber spittle, rank in its perfume,
Smeared the deal floor, to water long unused,
And 'neath each slippered foot a slimy liquor oozed.

A slender woman's frame, despoiled by force,
Upon a gore-stained form lay naked bare ;
The elder butchers gather round the corse,
And for their sacrilegious task prepare, —
Whilst others mingle jest with foul and bestial stare.

They hew and hack their victim, tearing out
Each entrail from its separate, sacred shrine ;
Their scalpels driving through the throat of doubt,

In hopes the higher mysteries to divine,
And place their little names where the immortals shine.

Each disembowelled atom gets its name,
Prosaic or poetical, which traps
The thoughtless, who for medicine doth claim
Superior range of science, which o'erlaps
The tall redoubts that lie beyond their narrow maps.

The brain, the heart, each artery and nerve,
Their vandal hands remove, and wistfully
Their hungry eyes each particle observe,
Noting each phase, and whether it agree
With the accepted code which rules anatomy.

Discuss they now the cause of her demise,
With reasons culled from books and overstrained,
Whose meaning, vogueless terms complete disguise,
Mere gibberish lisped like magpies tutor-trained,
From slotted tongues, and this the grand result obtained :

That she was dead, — she died of fell disease, —
Died just because the heart declined its work,
Because the blood did in its channels freeze
And lungs did their allotted labor shirk, —
For this are graveyards robbed, and men waylay and burke !

The climax of their infamy to cap,
Their bloody fingers clutched the ruddy cheer,
Till stupor did their barren minds enwrap, —
They drank and drank again, the fog to clear,
And clamor misty drunk, and stagger here and there,

Dilating on the merit of old wines,
 Bordeaux, and Port, and Hock, and Rhenish Red,
 'Twixt native and the foreign drawing lines
 So shadowy of comparison, they spread
Around between the claims like snarled skeins of thread.

A lacquer thin of culture's mawkish mirth
 The low debauch and ribaldry veneers,
 Their deep research they deem shall realms enrich,
 And lucidate the midnight morn of years,
Which else hath darkly dawned untrumped of chanticleers.

 "The end of human toil is fame, or wealth ;
 Presumption merits neither," Uker spake ;
 "When frauds and fools convene to heal unhealth,
 And their vocation, heaven-ordained, forsake,
The sane, enlightened world must count their goods opaque.

 "The Spartan mother's death this woman died ;
 Hers was the heart heroic, seldom found
In these degenerate days ; she cast aside
 All comforts linked with wealth, and trod the ground
Where life-destroying, pestilential spores abound.

 "When braggart men quailed to their iron core,
 And shrank at sight of black, protruding bones ;
And soldiers, 'nured to brutal battles' gore,
 And hard crime-convicts grit disease dethrones,
And all refuse to soothe the dying patient's moans, —

 "She came, aroma-breathing, looking hope, —
 A paradisal blossom, blooming pure ;

Ill-omened stars met in her horoscope,
But set her will's fair colors more secure,
And lent her touch, the heavenly Gilead-balsam's cure.

"Those dumb, cold lips late lisped the audible
Intoning sweetness of an angel mind ;
These waxen fingers felt the pulse grow still,
And stroked the fevered brow with pressure kind,
Whilst Plague his trident swung above her, poison-tined.

"Voices solicitous she heeded not
Of friends, but 'tended to her plans self-laid,
As ivy twining round a blighted spot,
Infused she hope, and strength, and blessed aid,
As brave as Nightingale or Saragossa's maid.

"But Nature is a jealous mother ; she
Exacts for violations of her laws,
A very Shylock in severity ;
The pound of flesh is hers. If blood she draws,
'T is hers also ; the bond admits no saving clause.

"To crush her beauty in their ruin ruts,
The massive wheels of rolling months connive ;
The blooming rose of health reaction shuts,
Enfeebled by her task, howe'er she strive
To live for others' weal, her actions but survive.

"And many an eye were dim, and many a tongue
Swung wrothy, were this outrage lisped round ;
And not a ghoul of these were left unstrung,
Nor should their ashes rest in Christian ground,
But float on murky air where evil imps abound.

“Yon pompous corpse, in sombre toggery robed,
And brilliants bright, all moist with trickled dew,
Which late the casket's rich enclosure globed,
Belonged to one well known in life to you,
Whose word or wealth a senate's labors could undo ;—

“Who was, if miserly amassed dross,
Rich, and the sweat-eked coin of toil be such, —
Rich if the blood of starving craftsmen gloss
The saffron dirt, and give it value's touch ;
For wealth as these afford contained his coffers much.

“The magnates of the nation to him knelt,
And misanthropic man-gods lowly bowed ;
With foreign missions handsomely he dealt,
Yet ne'er the palm of need with aid endowed,
But spurned the lowly poor with lordly air and proud.

“Where commerce was, there, too, his name was known,
Comprising all of credit-worth in trade ;
He died, as all who live must die, alone,
And those that bore his pall, and they who made
His grave, were agents taught to play their parts, and paid.

“The classic features of which fawners boast,
Or boasted, in their festering horror see,
The name so recent known on every coast
Is like his being, ancient history,
Save to his heirs, who each a counsel has in fee.

“The will's adjustment and the probate court
Consume their time, and thought, and self-respect,
Whilst lawyers fatten on the golden sport,

And leave the grave the guard of cold neglect,
And here the corpse reclines for doctors to dissect.

“ From memory’s grave-yard rose a buried thought,—
Five lustrums dead, I knew a peasant once
Whose labor only scant return had brought,
Open of hand, and bright of countenance,
Whose death required no sham the lost worth to enhance.

“ Brown upland fields and low road-skirting fens
Were dark with gathering groups of mourning men,
Who marched in sober, solemn files of tens,
For mile and mile of road, through brake and glen,
And wept to part the friend they ne’er should see again.

“ And e’en in later years his grave was trimmed
By unforgetful, friendly hands, and flowers
Shed petals on’t, and emerald myrtles rimmed
Its incline’s marge, and there in sunny hours
Melodious warblers vied in wealth of vocal powers.

“ So Lucre has its own dominion wide,
With power to purchase most material things,
But th’ essences which e’en in these abide,
And th’ attribute which round each essence rings,
Cannot be bought, thought I, with all the gold of kings.”

Pleased with the recess now my mentor gave,
Awhile we lingered in the purer air,
And joined a multitude upon the pave,
Fast hurrying to a temple where gas-glare
Illumed the myriad faces upward raised in prayer.

Beautified with the influence of faith,
And thrilled with tranquil touch of ritual,
All listening rapt to what the teacher saith ;
Telling of gifts which without stint befall
To faithful, sandaled to obey the Master's call.

Now all their voices blend in silvern strain
Of song, which incense-like ascends to God,
Or fleece-white cloud that floats without a stain
Far o'er the smoky vapors that slow plod
With clodded feet, the vales of lower space rough-shod.

In the camp of ages,
Where Truth engages
With the crippled errors of Sophistry,
Its own bright blade only
Slays them, and lonely
Lays them entombed in their infamy.

In the one fold gathered
The Nazarene fathered,
O, God our Maker, we pray to thee
For thy gifts and graces
To transmute the races
To seek thee that wander astray from thee.

Teach us each to labor
For his erring neighbor,
And grant us the strength which the task demands ;
Myths oriental
And transcendental
Smite under the weight of thy mighty hand.

Be thy word the token
Of the chain unbroken,
That for aye hath been and shall ne'er not be;
And henceforth forever
May the blind discover
The true life-light that abides in thee.

In north cold dun-lands
And sweet south sunlands
Thy Godhead's worshipped where so late reviled,
Spreading o'er, and reaching
Round each clime's thy teaching,
Till the whilom savage is thy humble child.

Outspreading the great gathering, high up
A golden aureola bright I saw,
Whose centre blazed a blue inverted cup,
Which rained a radiance round without a flaw,
And this shot varied rays which filled my soul with awe.

These lights encircled brows distributed
Unequal, for to some no glim was given,
Who, blind, knelt to the glow contributed
By the elect, and who through doubt had striven
To grace, which pearly floats on mercy's stream from heaven.

Much did I marvel at distinction; I
Am not, God help me, an o'er-pious man;
What creeds, and dogmas, and decrees imply
My intellect's too limited to scan:
We've each a soul to save, — let's save it as we can.

I hold my dear belief, and you your own ;
I would not filch it from you, nor should you
Hurl at my naked head your bigot stone,
Because my visual hill hath not your view ;
Six thousand creeds prevail ; can all be false and true !

From faith nursed from my mother would I part
Now in my gray decline, beside the grave ?
Seek first the reddest blood-drop of my heart,
And thou mayest have it ; but o'er all, I crave
To die, as you may deem, to that one faith a slave.

"Those lights," 'gan Uker, "are of faith the crowns
Given by the Father to his children, true
To the Son's teachings, through all threats and frowns ;
You'll notice that the larger crowns are few,
And those the humble wear who question not, but do.

"Feeling that unto Him all days belong,
Their heart's door opens, and the sun sails in ;
Their ways are simple, — just a shred of song
Thumbed from the harp of hope, to which they pin,
Presumptionless, the promised prize they've striven so to win.

"Doubt is damnation, there is certitude ;
Reason must strain her joints for foothold here ;
Within this chamber she can but intrude,
And be rebuked, for this is not her sphere,
Since Revelation, mystic-fixed, defied the buccaneer.

"The poor still keep the covenant ; the rich
Maintain they do. The deed belies the word.

Their creed's a canker garment, just an itch
Which heats the heart, and turns their blood to curd ;
Their zeal in God's pure sight is sure a thing absurd.

“ See yonder pompous worshipper, who nods
As if he owned the church ; nay more, the town ;—
The puppet wires he holds that work the gods,
And as he pulls, the fates and furies frown
Or smile, and good or ill from their preserves cast down.

“ Bearded his solemn face, and most austere
His features hang together like a mask
Of some gaunt Israelite, who many a year
Plied his nefarious, pauper-breeding task
Usurious, of cent per cent, whate'er his hunger ask.

“ The balance which obtains 'tween right and wrong,
His sordid, grasping soul could not admit ;
He levies tribute all the line along,
Dealing his selfish blows where seemeth fit,
Clenching th' avaricious spike where'er it chance to hit.

“ Behold his venal brain bared to our gaze,
See the base thoughts which worm-like there upcrawl,
Countless and teeming from their burrow's maze ;
Lashed by the scourge desire, and at the call
And beck of will debased that goads them as if gall.

“ His thoughts grew black and swollen till they burst,
When one inflated with its essence, like
Goliath rose of direful shape accurst,
Bull-hided, tough, and well prepared to strike,
Howe'er its owner bid, whate'er he may dislike.

“ An honest laborer, who, for length of years,
Had plowed his arid fields and sown his seed,
Who felt rich joy to note the bristling spears,
For his own sweat shone on each waving reed,
And moistened every root, as grace a Christian deed ;

“ Faithful to every trust, to every toil
Enured, too trustful e'en to keep his time
In book or record, and to-night recoil
The faults of his remissness like a crime
On heads he loved, for death hath smote him in his prime.

“ The orphan's tear and widow's wail are vain
To move that stony heart ; they reach it not ;
Imbedded in the lymph that's grown of gain,
Absorbing honor like a chronic rot,
Blood-clotted, where the probe of pity enters not.

“ ‘ I've paid him every dollar which was due ;
Yea, even more, in perquisites and gifts ;
I hold the proof of day and date, and you,
Nor your demands, nor dubious shifts,
I care nought for, nor where your barque in future drifts.’

“ Thus hard he strove to reconcile his tale
With conscience, still demurring, still outraged ;
As well might mariner seek to still the gale
When all the elements are close engaged,
For truth against him stood at the affront umbraged.

“ Here many congregate their wanton eyes
To feast lascivious on some beauteous face ;
For fashion some, and some an enterprise

To find abettors for, or trade, the case
Is the exception where man worships from pure grace.

“Yet are there just men here, and women too,
Who would be true, whate’er had been their lot ;
Such are not of the creed-crazed bilious crew,
With icy features, yet with passions hot,
Condemning all who see the light as they cannot.

“They see not their thought-opposites, though near ;
These holy people all, they never think
A living mass surrounds them in grim gear,
With word and action calking every chink
Of their belief with fact and matter, Nature’s meat and drink.

“And there they sit, bald-pated, mellow men,
In conclave solemn, calm, self-satisfied ;
Old casuists, who seek the how and when
To know of all phenomena, and aside
Cast myths by whate’er creed or craft long dignified.

“They make strange gestures, and in speech they tell
Of Oneness, Unity, and the great Thee-Thou ;
That Conscience-ache, they hold, compriseth Hell ;
That God exists, or does not, they allow ;
That something does, they know, but what will not avow.

“They’ve pillaged histories sacred and profane,
Geology, theology, the laws
Of mathematics and philosophy, — in vain,
The great doubt still remains, the cause of cause,
And cold this hymn they chant to win their own applause.”

- " All the yellow solar idols of the Ganges,
All the superstitious palsy of the East,
And the exudence that round the Koran flanges,
And the senile incantations of the priest,
- " Are dissolving into nebulæ and chaos,
To the nothing that they were before the lie,
By the Hercules of Truth as grim Antæas
Are they strangled, see their corpses floating by ;
- " And the Truth, the never-shaken, takes their places ;
He has cleft the rusty armor of their gods,
And reason freed illumines the torture traces
On the souls that quailed before the Fakir-nods ;
- " And the brotherhood of faith in Mother Nature
Is increasing, growing broader, rolling on,
More than Rhodian Colossus in its stature,
From far Nicaragua striding to Ceylon ;
- " And the ever-breathing, boundless soul of science
Such automata convulseth as remain,
Pulsing action into man, and self-reliance
Teaching worth is what the energies obtain.
- " Drying up the dead lagoons of superstition,
To the prayer of Baal, unheeded, giving bread ;
Raising high the sloughy plane of man's condition,
Till he jostle the myth moguls of the dead."
- Here Uker roared outright, and Jeal, long dumb,
Grew speeched, and said, while glee his utterance
drowned,

“How great these mortals are ; much as a drum
Is ponderous in magnitude of sound” ;
And laughter strained his ribs, till Uker chid and frowned.

Their auditorium seemed so clammy cold,
As 't were a cave in arctic iceberg, where
The moon in winters, ever frozen, rolled,
And every word they spoke shrill-pierced severe,
Like surgeon's scalpel cold, and discord to the ear.

Next saw I 'neath the branches of an oak
Whose waving boughs drew lines athwart the moon
A motley crowd who midnight echoes woke,
With yell, and cry, and call, and craving croon,
For one who thus addressed them, calm as breeze in June.

“The face of Nature wore its sweetest smile,
Green robes of June the meadows did adorn ;
The cedars on the hills, for many a mile,
Nodded their plumes against the sky, in scorn,
Like one who in their shade that time was born,
Since mocked in tyrant might, the sons of toil,
Turning their bread to stones, to tares their corn,
And in this vale of trial and turmoil,
With battle-axe doth meet his fellow's reedy foil.

“Why our fair planet on that day or year,
Should slumb'ring lie unmoved by the shock,
Whose force to-day would shake this mundane sphere
From centre to circumference, and unlock
Sleep's closed gates, if frozen deep in rock ;
I cannot say, but in my soul I feel

'T was fear men's actions then and there did block,
Their protest might have saved the commonweal
From gaping wounds more deep than Galen's skill can heal.

"The light of day first touched his feeble sight
In sallow climes, beneath the orient sun,
Long ere imperial Rome attained her might,
Or Egypt saw her pyramids begun,
Or warp for veil of Goddess Pallas spun,
In such red days, in royal right he reigned,
As in our own the world he doth o'errun,
Lolling in laps of luxury, blood-stained,
As if by God on high he had been king ordained.

"His race is the Semitic, but his blood
Caught tints of Aryan and Hametic too,
And guilt-seeds, planted long before the flood,
To full fruition in his person grew,
Multiplying myriad-fold anew,
Like mustard-seed blown wide beyond control,
Until they 'light on laboring me and you,
And leech-like bleed, with lips of burning coal,
And stamp the hardened dies that mar our manhood's soul.

"As Capital now known, mere brazen fool,
Whose due is freemen's scorn, nor yet should all
The sacred stench of blood and iron rule,
Your will for one brief hour hold in thrall,
Your colors nailed, then by them stand or fall :
If fall you must, in beauty's blaze of noon
At duty's martyr-post, your glorious pall,

Were borne by hearts that beat to God's own tune
Of whate'er order known, as Union or Commune."

Faint the applause his shallow speech obtained,
As straight a young compatriot stepped forth,
With fervid face, and rough ; and bellowing, strained
His sapling lungs for all their force was worth,
And railed about man's rights ; rights native to his birth.

"Mold of man, why shame your sires?
Are you only slaves?
Freemen, paupers, build the pyres ;
Touch the fuse of your desires,
Strike, or get ye graves !

"Wealth abounds ; you make it ; you
Have not food to eat ;
Know ye not what men should do ?
Your children hunger, — be ye true :
Do you owe them meat ?

"Every traitor thief has gold ;
You have blood and bone.
Is this brittle, and that cold,
Will ye idly stand and fold
Your arms, and cringe and moan ?

"What did Hoefer ? What did Tell ?
What did France for bread ?
What did Hampden ? and how well
Did noble Boston Town rebel
In her hour of dread ?

“ Act ; that only, — nothing more ;
Simply will and force ;
Heed ye not each Rothschild’s roar ?
Better dye your hands in gore, —
You are Wealth’s own source.

“ Kings are cowards, wealth’s a clown, —
Labor laughs at both ;
Action only brings renown, —
Would ye wear the freeman’s crown ?
Take the freeman’s oath.

“ Swear, each ruler shall through merit
Only fill his place,
Freemen, who of right inherit
Jackson’s grit and Warren’s spirit,
Shall each office grace.

“ Swear, that while the rich and strong
O’er poor and weak hold sway,
Ye yield no tittle unto wrong, —
The rights you’ll guard that do belong
To man with life away.”

Three rounds of cheers ascended to the stars,
Jarring their crystal ear-drums with a din,
As if the imprisoned clamor of all wars
Had burst the massive walls which held it in,
And strove of Jove the prize for weirdest sounds to win.

When all vibrations of their echoes ceased,
The scene dissolved in vacancy. I called
For Uker, Jeal ; unanswered. So released,
I felt myself most sweetly disenthralled,
To find ’t was all a dream by which my mind was walled.



MONKSWOOD GRANGE.

CLUB together all the shadows of a luckless, joyless life,
The vicissitudes and sorrows that belong to years of
strife,

All the ills that mortals suffer, all the anguish forced to bear,
Of my griefs they 'd all computed form but the minor share.
Forty years away from kindred, forty years from friends and
home;

Every day an age of hardship, something new to overcome.
And now that home I am returned, I am saddened by the
gloom,

And wish to God I had in India met an humble soldier's
doom.

Though a wormy grave received me, or my corpse the sun
should bake,

It were sweet, beside those feelings which my withered
frame now shake.

Here I stand, my hair all lacquered in a coat of silver white;
Here I stood when boyish fancies filled my bosom with
delight.

Yes, I cannot be mistaken, this is Monkswood, Monkswood
Grange,

Wrecked and ruined, all forsaken, looking so neglected,
strange,

Porticoes and columns fallen, buttresses and gables crack't,

Arches groined and interlacing, crumbled, scarce a thing intact.

There, a castellated turret, like a tombstone o'er the dead,
Crowns the hoary Castle's ruins which around its base are spread.

Multifoils and mullions eaten by the worm of decay,
In my solitude, I ask me, am I stabler than they?
Pardon, reader, if a tear-drop trickled down my saffron cheek
While I thought of happier moments; you perhaps had been as weak.

Here I spent my youthful summers; here I learned to love and hate;

Here I ate the fruit forbidden which my days did desolate.
O, Ambition, curse thee! curse thee! foolish, even to the last, —

I had trusted to an armor which for me was never cast.

Here I learned to love, I told you, and received a woman's love,

And that woman was a seraph from the happy spheres above.
Thus I thought, nor doubt it now, though two-score years have intervened,

While her presence from my vision countless dreary shadows screened.

Rushing now comes memory's torrent, crushing all obstructions down,

I am but a barque at ocean, rudderless, and useless grown.
How much do I owe thee? Monkswood, Allan Monkswood, let me know,

If my debt to thee's not canceled by a life of ceaseless woe!
Speak to me, beloved Ida, speak to me, thou woman saint!
Component of all that's lovely, passing human pen to paint.

Speak to me? I talk at random. Ida may be in her grave;
Many an one since we have parted fell to blightsome death
a slave.

At random speak I, can you blame me? you yourself are
but a child;

When you've travelled through life's desert, you will speak
as I do, wild ;

If you 'd never known a father, never felt a mother's care,
Doomed to bear a name which, doubtless, you had not the
right to bear.

When you've fought with wolves and tigers, even worse,
with savage men,

And have driven the roaring lion, crouching, back into his
den ;

When you've reckoned death a pleasure, honor sprung from
womb of crime,

Nursed upon the ulcers growing on the lustful flesh of time;
When with such you've been acquainted, and if memory
live them out,

You will speak your mind at random, I assert, for who can
doubt.

Here it was that night we parted; here I buried earthly
bliss

In a yawning grave, and roofed it with a pure, impassioned
kiss.

That time Orion sank to rest as crimson as to-night,
And the moon the same the valley robed in garb of silvery
light.

Through these grounds in youth we rambled, o'er the moor-
land, by the caves,

Where we often gazed in silence on the river's silken waves,

There we oft disturbed its surface by the dipping of the oar,
When we sculled our little dory from the yellow-pebbled
shore.

There we plucked the virgin lily at the outlet of the creek;
Here we culled the garden roses, blushing like young Ida's
cheek.

Secluded from the world of action, mixing little with man-
kind,

Here I built ærial structures which a breath has undermined.
Here our passion, never spoken, burnéd with volcanic force;
Allan Monkswood, thou hadst guessed it, hast thou ever
felt remorse?

Me you banished like a felon; well, perhaps it was your
right;

What was I that you should favor, — I, a homeless, name-
less wight?

Were I wealthy, — well, no matter, she was free, I did not
bind, —

Thou hadst singled out her partner, though unsuited to her
mind.

One who for a golden guinea would another Christ betray:
Shadows! is the blood of Monkswood mixed with that of
Castlereigh?

Ye are silent, but I read ye, — ere that name she would
assume,

Ida Monkswood would have suffered more than fair
Lucrece's doom.

Man should brand him as a Tarquin, man should treat him
as a fiend,

And if there be hell for devils, there will be that viper's end.
I cannot forgive thee, villain; villain, I will always rate; —

There is not a nobler passion burns the human breast than hate.

Shades of evil ! who comes hither, shifting like a troubled sprite ;

Visaged as a man of science, hair a wavy mass of white ?

" Child of Adam, Hubert Monkswood ! Breathe not, sir, that hated name ;

Aged though you seem, I dare resent an epithet of shame."

" We are to each other strangers. You, I never saw before."

" Monkswood, you are blind or crazy." " Keep thy distance, I implore !"

" We have met before and often ; we are friends ; I speak but truth :

I have rocked you in your cradle, I have watched you in your youth.

I have lived through many ages ; I am hoary, now, and old ; Many a year is yet before me ; much there is I might unfold."

" If thou knowest, deign to tell me, why this place is all awry? [sky?"

Where are those who were unto it what the sun is to the

" Where are those you've loved and hated? this is what you'd have me say ;

In a word, they're all transforméd long ere this to mother-clay.

Do not stagger like a drunkard ; you yourself must fall too soon ;

The day of your existence, Monkswood, now is in its afternoon.

She you loved, your cousin gentle, maiden true as Tuscan steel,

Wilted like a rose in spring-time, from a wound that ne'er
doth heal,

Wound that baffles mortal science, then defying human art
(Doctors seldom have a patient dying of a broken heart).
Obey our rulers, God commands us, bids man honor and
obey."

"She was never disobedient." "Liar, best this word
gainsay!"

"Impulsive mortal, cease a moment! she obeyed the law of
God;

In disobeying, such as ever underfoot His teachings trod.
They would drag her to the altar; they had fixed upon the
day;

But the Lord who heard her pleadings took her to Himself
away."

"This at least is consolation: though the nectar's mixed
with gall,

There be times when retribution soars triumphal over all."

"He, the false, aspiring schemer; he, the villain consum-
mate,

Fell beneath the hand of woman, in the climax of her hate.
Monkswood of this ancient castle, Monkswood of this
broad demesne,

Perished on the scaffold, brow-decked with a murder's
bloody stain."

"Allan Monkswood charged with murder! proven guilty,
sentenced, hung!

From my fructive tree of fancy, such a shoot had never
sprung.

But our age is an age of scandal; human fiends all round
us dwell;

Every hamlet is a Sodom, every city is a hell.

Now there's no advancement; nothing, nothing, worthy of
the age,

'T will be cramped between the others upon History's holy
page."

"You are sunk in soundless languor, and at venture you
converse;

Seldom Nature's lesson reading; never seeking to rehearse.
Look around and measure progress; can the change of
forty suns;

Tell if backward, then, or forward, that our stately planet
runs.

Hear the groan of troubled waters, see the wheel that cuts
the wave,

And the laden craft fly forward; notice how she doth
behave.

Hear the noise, like distant thunder, rumbling on the iron
rails;

See the giant work of wonder, dowered with strength that
never fails.

Mark the haughty, daring aspect. Ha! he's vanished out
of sight,—

Vanished like a conjured vision in the clouds of early night.

View above your head the thread that wanders on from post
to post;

'T is the trumpet which our voices sound on many an alien
coast.

Instant as the lightning's flash it flings unto the ends of
earth,

All account of human action, at the moment of its birth.

And there's no advancement, say you?" "Thus I said,
and still say so;

Perchance I do not reason clearly: I but speak what I do know.

"Gaze around you, sage or wizard; see oppression grind the poor;

See the oppressors interview them, each a forehead-gilded boor.

Fool with despot wedged and welded, grafted like an orchard shoot,

Sometimes bearing, but the issue proves more rotten than the root.

I could curse them, but in curses lies no remedy for wrong;
Crafty vermin, could I kill them, as the ancients could, by song,

I would kneel to great Apollo, I would sing in lofty strain;
What is there that should deter me, if my efforts proved not vain?

I would study, practise, polish; I'd do all that could be done;

Willingly I'd shed my heart's blood if the object might be won.

Is there in this world a valor that can overreach their height;
That could fling them from their stations in the apex of their might?

If there be, why is it fostered but to languish and decay?
There are what the Truth must conquer, conquer ought the truth to-day.

Ours is progress meet for devils; hell is frescoed with such stains;

Men as fiends swim lakes caloric, bound by despots' clanking chains.

War's declared, and desolation oozes from the womb of strife;

Numbers fall beneath the bullet and the foul assassin's knife.

If a nation wrong a nation, should a nation weapons draw?
If a neighbor wrong you, smite him; no, you know a higher law.

Could not peaceful arbitration work the same in either case?
'T will be Progress when the goose-quill will the burnished sword replace.

Labor is but slavery servile; than the galley-slave of Spain,
Lower is the life that ever bone and muscle must sustain.
You may differ, but I know it, subject to the cold world's spleen,

Intellect destroyed what is he, nothing but a cheap machine.
Such has sad experience taught me, spat on by those apish lords,

Fitter to control a brothel than Britannia's royal guards.
But I've conquered, while I suffered; for myself I nothing crave.

I am used to hardest labor; I can toil unto the grave."
"Monkswood, all your toil is over; you are heir of Monkswood Grange,—

Owner of these lordly acres which eclipse the vision's range.
It was never Allan Monkswood's; he usurped your father's right,

Him he murdered to possess it, slew him in the dead of night."

Here the modest queen of midnight, Luna, hid behind a cloud;

Rolling spectre, substance, shadow, all, within an inky shroud.

Time hath spoken, wizard hoary, he discloseth golden truth;

In age the birthright is restored me, which was cheated
 from my youth,
 And the miseries of a life-time on my spirits burst anew.
 My father murdered by his brother! this was terrible, yet
 true;
 What's to me, to-day, the value of estates and title grand,
 With the glass of life upturned, running down the final
 sand.
 None to love, and none to love me; living even none to
 hate;
 None in death to weep above me, — I am truly desolate.
 What a bitter compensation for a life of galling pain!
 Why doth fate with fortune mock me? wealth at death is
 worthless gain!
 Thus 'twas written, and I could not, cannot, blot the
 writing out;
 Man may plan, but the accruance God will surely bring about.
 Yet my wealth I can bestow upon the needy and the poor,
 Who may pray for me the hour when Death halts before
 my door.

THE BLACKSMITH OF DORCHESTER HEIGHTS.

I.

A SMITHY stood, in your grandsire's time,
 On the stony slope of .Dorchester Heights;
 Its rafters then were gloved with grime,
 The structure "lang syne" saw its prime,
 And its forge fires burned alone o' nights.

The smith was a lithe and a wiry man,
'Thout lumpy muscle or corded vein,
Whose waist you might with both hands span ;
At sight implying, that prowess ran
From might of muscle to wealth of brain.

Yet had he strength, the strength of steel ;
Not the gray-flecked stuff that's crude and cast,
But the bright blue metal the craft anneal
To withstand such blows as abuse may deal,
And the ravage and use of age outlast.

With little of speech for his neighbor folk,
Solemn as they, and as silent, too,
How sped his days on their minds ne'er broke,
Yet in secret conclave, vexed, they spoke,
How he did an unchristian life pursue.

He read their hearts whilst he kept his way,
Free giving his sweat for their yellow gold ;
His work was good, so the old books say,
Which we ne'er had known had he wrought away
At his forge, till death in those days of old.

II.

In Boston Court-house, quaint old place,
Inbarred was a maid unto death condemned, —
A fair young woman, with sweet round face,
Her dark eyes telling of deep disgrace,
For she stood alone by the bars inhemmed.

Sentenced to death for what crime, who knew ?

Witchcraft the court declared, and the proof —
 She spoke in the tongue of the demon crew,
 The judge so said, and it must be true ;
 None there dared question, — all stood aloof.

As the listeners eager the sentence heard,
 The corridors echoed their shout of joy ;
 So thankful justice had not deferred
 (And justice never in those days erred),
 The penalty earned of witchery.

Then the blacksmith's voice cleft the vapid shout, —
 "Judge, art thou God, and who gives thee right
 With his gift Life to tamper, without
 Weighing the facts by the scales of doubt ? —
 Hath reason or law for this charge to smite ?

"Hast proof of guilt, and what is the crime ?
 She mingled not with her neighbors much ;
 Speaks not their tongue, and her creed's not in
 The volume of God which you hold within
 The iron vise of your fingers' clutch.

"Dost know her ways, or her creed, or tongue ?
 Thou Solon who'd barter her life away,
 At a bigot's trap, by a knave upstrung :
 They were centuries old, when yours were young,
 And young will they be when yours decay."

"Beadle, silence this turbulent knave !"
 Spake the Court, and th' officer ventured forth ;

The Vulcan awaited him, firm and brave,
And straight from his shoulder his brawn arm drave,
And smote him for all that his strength was worth.

“He shall have his say!” said a group; “not here
Shall a voice be choked while a life’s at stake.
The fool who bars him had best beware,—
Fair play for this pleader, let no man dare
Our law of the rights of speech to break.”

“Judge, thou art mighty, but mightier far
The People, thy masters, who’ll hear my plea;
I’ll speak, though await me the bolt and bar,
And false I’ll prove you, your rulings are
On the trump-up charge of witchery.

“Her language is elfish, you say, because
You cannot one sound of it understand;
Deem you the evidence has no flaws,—
You law-giver, judge, know the Brehon laws
Were writ in that tongue by a Gaelic hand

“Ere England had laws, or tongue, or creeds,
And this is a maid of the Keltic land;
Your learning and law are brittle as reeds,
Whilst ignorance rules at the bench, it needs
That vigilance watch with a scorching brand.”

“This woman is guiltless! open your door,
And lead her hence to her urban home!”—
So shouted the group who condemned before,
And the maid went free, and forevermore
Not a witch was tried ’neath that dusty dome.

THE ISLE OF SHRINES.

IN a calm stretch of sea where the sunlight long lingers,
Jewelled in glories of flowers and vines,
Where towers and temples point skyward fingers
From the rich land's lap, lay the Isle of Shrines.
In its calm heart valley a city was builded,
Where gods art treasured had many a shrine,
From myths bronze-breasted, to men crest-gilded,
But worshipped were God and his son Divine.

Prosperity smiled upon lowland and highland,
To thought-wealth and toil-worth all rule they gave ;
Equality triumphed, and the breast of that island
Nursed never a traitor, nor suckled a slave.
Never sail of theirs foreign port ever whitened,
Their wealth and virtues were all their own,
Till seaward a galleon burning, brightened
The night, to them was no strange craft known.

Well did they succor the sole survivor,
Better for them had he slept in the sea ;
The laws he studied by which they thrive, or
The well-spring of power in a peasantry.
As his birth-land he sailed to, in skiff gift-laden
With triumph of Nature, and art, and mind,
Cheers in his wake fell many of man and maiden,
Who the lessing piers on the isle's shores lined.

On reaching his home, which was palace, and prison,
Church, and senate, and court, accurst ;
In the Shrine Isle's praise hath his voice arisen,
Till its fame o'er his land like a meteor burst ;
And priest and peasant the glory recounted
Of pilgrimage thither, in God's good time,
What bars opposed were at length surmounted,
When thousands sailed for the sacred clime.

Christians all, and in sweet expectation
Of finding on earth the Saviour's shrine,
Whose sight should secure to their soul's salvation,
For of faith thus fixed grew the grand design.
Fair was the breeze as the barques that bore them,
And finer fleet never furrowed the foam ;
Prayers were wafted to the blue arch o'er them, —
Pæans in praise of the joy to come.

Than marble each islander's face was blanker,
As that fleet sailed in o'er the harbor bar,
And the pilgrims' songs, where they lay at anchor,
Fell harsh on their ears as a wail of war.
From shore they moved onward, inland, over
Fair fields of flower, and blossom, and bloom,
As a herd urged on by some tyrant drover,
To death-shambles shrouded in golden gloom.

The crops foot-trampled, wilted, and rotted,
And spread like scars on the hurt land's breast ;
Wealth lay dead in the toil that begot it,
While the horde rolled on in its holy quest ;

Each urban temple was passed unnoticed,
And mission church, which the plain cross bore,
Nor stopped till the city was reached, remotest,
In rare shrines rich from the island's shore.

At the gates of the city they knelt in prayer,
In the stony squares, like saints of old ;
When the populace saw the pilgrims there,
A council of rulers was straightway held.
From saint-shrine to myth-shrine the strangers wended
Their tortuous courses, from all gates in,
But found not the sought shrine in temples splendid,
Where the Christ-creed hallowed the aisles within.

Till their eyes glad feast on a structure solemn,
Grand, massive, and modeled in the might of art ;
At its portals they halted, a countless column,
Ere disposing themselves in its spacious heart,
Where the soul, drinking deep of the glory without it,
Grew drunk, and a frenzy possessed the mind,
And finding their god-shrine, they ranged round about it
Like drought-crazed cattle or mad men blind.

Song to their idol ascended, and psalter,
Which happy, though heedless, stood aloof,
Perched high on the disk of his marble altar,
A Golden Calf from horn to hoof.
Prince, priest, and peasant to that god bended
The knee, and shall worship him, all time hence ;
Yet their seed never, there the pod's life ended,
But the root knew nought of its decadence.

The rich, ever grinding its weaker neighbor,
Crowded the poor from the temple, when
In the might they arose that is born of labor,
And imbrued in the blood of their fellow-men
Their brawn arms, nor ceased till the sick sun fainted
On the shadowy lap of the pale young moon,
And the gore of a number the white walls tainted,
And the aisles with the spoils of feud were strewn.

Shocked at their havoc, in the midnight dismal,
Through the city ablaze, by its people set,
As a school of ghouls in a gulf abysmal,
They groped but to fall in the fiery net.
At the dawn was each isle-home razed and leveled
To the ground, and the tenants were out on the main
In the fleet, while the owners in red riot revelled,
Their Shrine Isle never to seek again.

Which a wild waste lies and shall lie forever,
As a warning sign on the road of life,
Whose sight may hypocrisy masked, discover, —
The rich man's greed, and the poor man's strife,
Teaching wealth, God-worshipped, bears its own death-
sentence,
That a war of class, is a people's doom,
And the vain and vicious should turn to repentance,
And that true God's love in the soul should bloom.

BERT BROODS.

FROM the silvern lips of white-plumed troops
Of waves a-march to the shelving strand,
Comes the tale I tell, as the twilight droops
Low over the straggling streaks of land,
That had witnessed all,—of Broods, the fool,
The hero, who saved from wreck more lives
Than the coast-guard trained in his ample school,
And more loved and blessed by the sailors' wives.

The masters carved his name on their ships ;
And his bust in bronze for a figure-head
Garnished the bows, and the babbling lips
Of crews his fame over far lands spread ;
But his hold on all hearts he lost in a night,
And his senses too, and 't was thusly done :
A sloop, to the lee of the light-house light,
Roused the port with the boom of her minute-gun.

Bert Broods pulled out in the dark and storm,
Past the reefs and under the scowl of the wreck,
Where spent, he observed a human form
In the surf, who clutched in his hands a speck ;
And groaning, his grip on the thing unlocks,
Which Broods beheld, — and he saw it float,
And chased it down, to his curse, the rocks,
And caught and laid it down safe in his boat.

So the man was lost, and Broods made the shore, —
A bare isle, and breaking the treasure's bands,
Found it gold-coin-full ; 't was a goodly store,
And its lustre his eye and his mind commands,

But his mind is gone, ground into the mist
That is in, and of, and about him set.
Yet he built there a hut, and each morn would list
To a coin's hiss sea-thrown paying the debt

Due his creditor, Sea, as he thought, till all
The dross was scattered to quiet its rage :
The waves one eve burst their chains of thrall
When tourists lounged 'round his hermitage, —
A wealthy pair, with an only son,
Deformed of limb, who had strayed from the hut,
While a blue brigade of waves did run
Up to it, and laid it low in a rut.

The parents rowed for their lives, for shore,
When Broods, the fool, heard the wailing child;
And catching him up, on his great shoulders bore
Him over the waves, that were rolling wild.
'Twas a godlike sight to see this thing done,
And he stranded his burden safe, and the light
Of lost reason dawned for Broods, and he won
What through greed he lost on that baleful night.

THE LEGEND OF DTHRUDER.

THE gates of day were closing in their jambs of burnished yellow,
And the umber landscape deepened towards the sun-deserted east;

Dark veins wound fleecy cloudlets like a *cobra-de-capello*,
In the Indian jungle coiled around a white-robed Brah-
min priest ;

As three soldiers from the shadows stepped into the inn of
Dthruder,
Filled their tankards, paid their ducats, drank, and filled,
and drank again,
Chaffed the little maid attendant, and from words in drink
grown ruder,
Sought upon her lips of ruby to impress their Bacchus
stain.

The burliest of the trio held her to his breast elated,
When the crone from off the hearth-stone rose to lend
her aid in vain,
Cursed, and raised against the filcher, her red palms deep
corrugated,
But his broad-axe sped and cleft the spell she meant for
him in twain.

Where the old inn stood at Dthruder two aged firs are
growing,
The comrades these, says legend, on whom the curse
divided fell,
Whilst the maid and burly soldier, say, who to the fact
were knowing,
Were wed, and lived long happy at a chateau in the dell.

LILIAN CLARE.

AND this is life ! a smile, a tear,
A sunbeam now, and a shadow then,
Sorrows apportioned to every year, —
Like mine are the days of my fellow-men.
Doubtingly back through the past I look,
But love, and hate, and gloom, I see,
And I weary, and close, and clasp life's book,
For it seldom brings pleasant thoughts to me.
I've never known a cloudless day,
I scarcely know what is meant by joy ;
Toil my infancy wore away,
This frame was given me to annoy.
The only light of my life was hope ;
Love nourished a love beyond compare ;
An unseen flame of a boundless scope
That filled my heart for Lilian Clare.
She was an angel, or something more ;
Beauty, and virtue, and grace combined ;
A being to live for, to love, to adore, —
I prized her soul, and I loved her, mind,
With a love Platonic, a love as pure
As hers had been, — 't was a passion rare ;
But thoughts would come I could not endure,
For I was unworthy of Lilian Clare.
I was so worthless, she so good ;
Love was all the wealth I could boast ;
One morning we parted, sad, grief-imbued, —
I sailed for luck to a distant coast,

Shipwrecked, cast on an isle unknown,
My companions the screaming tribes of air.
Years past ; I was lonely, but never alone,
For I lived with the spirit of Lilian Clare.

When scarcely fit to mix with my kind,
Fate steered a bark to my wave-girt sphere,
And I moved, amid scenes which I'd left behind,
Just at the close of the seventh year,
I sought the home of my loved ; at the door
A gruff voice croaked in my ear, "Forbear!
Let thy step pollute not the sacred floor
Of the home of the mortal of Lilian Clare."

I oped the door ; I stood with the dead, —
For cold in death lay Lilian Clare ;
Some things there were I would have said,
But my voice was choked with a chilly fear.
I stood, and gazed, and asked, perplexed,
Why did such virtue and beauty die ?
The answer I wait, I wait, and am vexed,
For I've given time, two-score years, to reply.

I have suffered much ; I am old and gray ;
But grief nor age has dimmed my love ;
I meet my Lilian here each day ;
And our spirits will soon unite above.
I have mused enough, and you may call
My grief a shadow, — a thing of air ;
The clouds fast gather, — soon night shall fall,
When I'll be happy with Lilian Clare.

CHALLENGED.

THE hushed world's palms lay clasped upon its bosom ;
The laughing runnels' lips were glued unyielding ;
The great oak's branches silent stretched and rigid ;
As ships' masts straight, the pine trees stately listened ;
The waving grain refused its ebb and flowing,
And still the lowing herds lay down death-weary ;
The reptile tribe coiled close within its chamber,
And all created life seemed in inaction,
Waiting the order which the hour should bring them.

High o'er the concave verge of the horizon
Twin shapes appeared, enrobed in clouds and lightning.
Blowing a triple blast on golden trumpets,
They sat in state upon the middle hill-top ;
Earth and Chaos' spirits were they, and responsive
Forth rolled up to them, lava and quartz boulders,
Pink corals, precious stones, and mineral jewels ;
Asphalt, and metals, and flat cakes of mica ;
And white-chalk strata, and the beachy pebbles,
Sandstone red, and flint, and finest earth loam.
Them asked the earth sprite : " Children, your life mission,—
In what has it resulted ? Where's the promise
Which you made us, — stands your bond unbroken ? "

" Great spirit," spake they ; " all the power you gave us
Have we not placed to good and proper uses ?
To all that live have we not been most bounteous ?
In our concretion life have we not furnished
With sustenance ? We've held the crazed seas pinioned ;

Given to ocean strength to bear her burdens, —
Huge argosies and fleets of navigation ;
Your mighty maggot man has rent our bowels,
Plundered our coffers, drained our very life-blood ;

Yet have we complained not, nor resented,
E'en when our sacred crypts are violated ?
When revolution lurked within our stomach,
Of hard digestion, we have sometimes purged it
Out the burning throat of fierce catastrophe,
Whereby man-worms have suffered. Can you blame us ?
They leave no stone unturned for their self-righting ;
So your first law is ours, as theirs, and shall be,
Until you alter, or repeal, or quash it."

Nature. — "Ye have interpreted our law ; yet linger."

Marched next the forest monarchs, and the bushes,
The stunted shrubs, and all the wild field-flowers,
Fair garden roses, and pale water-lilies ;
Wild briers, grasses, bulbous roots, and lichens,
Hedge-rows, and box-plants, and the cultured children
Of summer-houses and conservatories,
Plodding along, all marshalled in procession.
Thus Nature hailed them : "Children, your life mission, —
In what has it resulted ? Where's the promise
Which you made us, — stands your bond unbroken ?"
"Just mother," spake they, "hungers we have suffered,
And parchéd were our lips, with droughts of summer ;
Our veins were frozen by the frosts of winter ;
And we have wailed in stormy days, and murmured,
Yet have we labored, and have wombed unto thee

All living things that nestle in thy bosom.
These have we suckled, and if they have wronged thee,
Their vices sure are not of our own making.
'Mong our own species there are many poisons ;
We cannot well destroy them ; they are of us.
We are not Gorgons, — all our race is equal ;
They serve their uses, which you know, who made them."

Nature. — " Ye have interpreted our law ; yet linger."

The things that feel and think now filed up to them,
Quaking in dread before the high tribunal,
Which the great-small factors calmly questionéd
Of the vast frame-work, of the crawling empire ;
Now man, and beast, and fin'd and feathered creature,
Approached, and stood awaiting the dread sentence,
Which might undo them, for their sins were legion.

The mother hailed them : " Children, your life mission, —
In what has it resulted ? Where 's the promise
Which you made us, — stands your bond unbroken ?"
Advanced their spokesman, — a great nation's ruler ;
Trembling, replied, " Mankind, which is the master,
The great high-priest for whom all else is fashioned,
Doth stand before thee firm, to make thee answer ;
The gifts you gave us, we have made fair use of ;
The season's fruit, and mineral deposit,
The living things that air and ocean nurture,
And beasts which roam the untill'd wastes untamed,
We've turned to use, and wealth, and seed of power ;
And poor weak fellows even to do our bidding,
For just the food we give them, yet are thankless, —

And for the favors done dub us ungrateful ;
And if thou call'st *us* here for the accounting—
Of *our* life-stewardship, we do defy thee."

Then forth frowned Nature, gnashed her teeth, and muttered :

"We who 've made thee what thou art are shamed ;
We gave thee will, and intellect, and reason ;
Are these the uses, nay abuses, rather,
To which thou 'st lent them, sucking life from all things,
And yet enriching nothing (thou art fated !)
Except the worm that fests upon thy carcass ?
Thou feed'st upon thy fellow-man, to fatten
As no class else doth, on their kind's misfortunes ;
Thou hast no niche within life's temple earned.
These monsters straight annihilate, O Chaos !
Gird them with chains, that shall corrode and eat them ;
No place have we to spare them in our bosom."

Sheer down from nebulous folds of cloud-fields fleecy
Came Love, engirdled in a zone star-spangled.
"Mercy, good parent !" spake she ; "show them mercy,
O, I pray thee ! They are weak, yet spare them.
They are not Gods, as we are ; they have failings :
But even we have these. Forbear a little.
O, grant them one short season of probation !
Grant, by the love you bear me, your first offspring !
They have not dishonored nor defiled thee.
Each living order hath its poisons, certes.
If man did breakfast on them, Nature made them.
He is your noblest product, why destroy him ?

His art hath beautified your vales and hill-sides,
Placed golden rings upon earth's outstretched fingers,
And jewelled them with cities by his commerce,—
Yet you upbraid him: reason with him calmly;
More than brute he is,—counsel him, but spare him.
He's all I've lived for since I left your household;
At his warm hearth-stone ever I've been welcome."

Nature assuaged: "We've heard thy voice, O cherub!
Our threat shall not find ready execution,
But soon, in order, all in desolation
Shall fade away as smoke, and in their places
A new and nobler army, wise and honest,
Shall rise, not of their loins, but from our bosom,
To hate and curse them; and that curse, like thunder,
Above their graves, for aye, shall roll and rumble.
Let not their craft seduce thee ere thy heart break.
When that day comes, and thy barbed darts, we charge thee,
Not waste on tyrants, so death find them childless.
Depart ye, monsters! and be more than thankful,
The intercession of our child hath saved ye."
Then Nature, Chaos, and the chubby urchin,
Soared high into the azure depths, and vanished.

THE SEXTON'S STORY.

I'M a sexton from choice, sir; I've delved in this grave-
yard many a day.
Nigh all o' my youthful companions lie here in their cham-
bers of clay,

So I kinder like to be near them, as near as a man might be,
And am happy to feel I'm moving in the highest society;
For their spirits float round about me, and I talk with them

when I list, —

Bright suns in the crystal day-time, pure silver stars in the
mist.

They're all that's left of the faces and forms that my young
years knew:

Fair women with queenly graces, brave men to their man-
hood true.

At my age 'tis hard to be musing on the ways the old days
were spent, —

God gives us the years, says the parson, in hopes that we
may repent.

But what's a man got to repent of, who's done just as
well as he knew?

There'd be more deacons in heaven, if they'd borne all
I've been through;

If those favored few felt the sharp tingle of shovel, and
pick, and spade,

For sixty-odd winters, I'm thinking, they'd be more slow
to upbraid.

No, sir, I never was married, and you think, of course, to
be frank,

That in life's whirling lottery of prizes, I drew the excep-
tional blank,

And I'm sour and crabbed, since childless, hating the
happy who live, —

Who loves not woman nor child, him, know, sir, I never
forgive;

Baser than brute I count him; I had loved in my younger
day,

But I lost, and that's why singly I've rusted my years away.
Fairest she was of the living, queen of the sainted dead,
She left me a little before the naméd day to be wed.
You just step into this arbor, I'll show you wherein she
sleeps,—

Where you see these gray flags worn, there somebody
kneels and weeps.

Hers is the prettiest grave, I claim, that there is here in
this ground,

Spangled over with flowers, and ivy and myrtle bound;
There be graves that's piled with granite, makin' a sight
more show,

But when art bears the bell from nature, man's tastes must
be rated low.

That there is the grave of Morris, my work-mate many a
year;

In this next sleeps my friend Fitzgerald, a man, sir, who
had n't a peer

For honor, honesty, friendship, strength of will, and for
grit,—

Poor Fitz was a jolly good fellow, the heart and soul of wit.
He worked in the old canal, sir, in the summer of 'Thirty-
eight,

When he and Ike Syms one evenin' got boiling hot in debate
About a woman—no matter, but Syms grew wroth and
struck,

But quicker 'n a flash Fitz had him rolling flat in the muck,
And he'd let him up and 'ud nail him, and lay him out
agin

And agin, as an expert bowler sets up and knocks his pin.
Syms, from that, was the mildest cock what ever lost in a
fight,

And he got drunk with the rest of us, yes, stavin' drunk
that night.

So by-gones seemed to be by-gones, till a night in the fol-
lowing spring,

When the mischief awoke within him, which was only
slumbering. [high,

The two worked late, and the river they yet must cross, ran
And the blackness hung like a pall from the round of the
dusky sky;

They entered the old scow gaily, and shoved her out from
the shore; [oar.

Fitzgerald was stroke, and Syms at the bow, pulled a lusty
They steered straight out in the river, above the dam,
where falls

The pardoned ghost of the liquid over its prison walls,
And while in the rushing current, Syms the dark deed
essayd, —

Struck at Fitz with his oar and shattered its seasoned blade,
Then sprang to a snag in the river, just at the prow of the
boat, [to float.

And all that remained for Fitz, was down with the stream
The craft shot over the dam to the seething gulf below,
Pushed shoreward by the current, rocked zigzag to and
fro,

A wreck; and Fitz crawled from it; calling aloud, he said,
"Ike Syms is out in the water"; he never the wretch
betrayd,

Till the bank was all a swarmin' with a rough and rois-
terous crew

Of rafters, diggers, and draymen, yet Syms was nowhere
in view.

But we soon heard over the tumult his wild, soul-piercing
cries,
And we saw the gleam in the darkness which shot from his
blazing eyes.
We kinder smelt somethin' crooked, and there wa'n't none
who cared
To risk a life for his rescue, but there was a man that dared,
For we heard a splash in the river, and puffing and deep-
drawn breath, [death.
And one had entered the lists in the reckless race with
The race death lost, for he whose life appeared to be past
all hope,
With his rescuer landed safe in the brace of a derrick rope,
Feeling as cheap as a cur, sir, for he knew that there was n't
a cheer [came here.
For him that was gave; He travelled, and never again
And Fitzgerald, whose life he sought, was the man that
saved his own, [stone.
And he sleeps right here in his bed, sir, under this mossy

PIERRE ST. PIERRE.

THIS best ter have statements like them, pards, backed
up with the proof,
For most times it happens they're wove out o' spleen, warp
and woof;
When hearts be grown foul with the oozin' o' infidel lore,
And men's reason is et up with malice, they'd stab ye, an
shore

Up yer stiff 'gin the gulch side. I'll tell yer in or'nary
speech,
Thet man what keeps harpin' on preachers, I reckon a blow
an' a leech.
A plain man, I be, an' as rough, pards, as ever sledged
stakes on a find,
But this scoutin' at God an' his angels, cuts keener 'n north-
east wind ;
I hain't spoke muchly agin it ; 't wan't cos thet I did n't care.
Tho' I never coppered a church-box, an' ain't much given
to pray'r. [them was hurt,
"Wild!" Well, wot if I be ? I've feelin's, an' sooner 'n
I'd had rather a lost my claim in the yallerist pile of dirt
As ever was flumed ; an' right here is my weakermost p'int,
An' when mud is slung at a preacher, my bearin's is out of
j'int.

Long ago, when I cum with me wife and our kid to this
brush, [such rush,
'Fore mining was done hereabouts, and diggers cum with
Settlers wos scars, an' Injuns thicker 'n Jarsey flies, —
Red devils with hate bilin' over the rims o' their eyes ;
Then down from the head o' the Missip 'bout once ev'ry
other year,
Ter give ter his folks here a mission would come old Pierre
St. Pierre,
A Jes'it priest, as good, pards, as ever said beads an' as brave
As eny man need be ; may his restin' be sweet in the grave !
He's bin sleepin' fur years. One mornin' whilst readin' his
mass,
His flock a kneelin' about him down in the meadow grass,

His crucifix fixed to a pine, with its arms as big as my own,
Jest in the height of the service the air wos split with a
groan

An' a yell, as the priest gave the pard'ned the blessed
bread :

The groan was the cry of a white, an' the yell was a red
Man's whoop, skulkin' off with a kid ; the priest in a flash,
Grabbed the cross, strode his hoss, made a dash
For the imp, with his vestments blown back like a vine
In a gale, an' his ha'r was the light o' white stars in a line,
An' the cross hung from under his arm the longermost
shank

Ter git ther speed outen the critter a slappin'er on the
flank.

I seen him scoot by from my rye-field, an' seen the red
snake he pu'sued,

An' I picked up my rifle, an' mounted old Gascon, an' you 'd
A thought jedgment wos cumin', ter see how we kept up
sich pace,

All that day ontill dusk, an' the red he 'd the best o' the race,
Tho' I covered him onçe in a while, but he wa 'n't within
range o' the shot,

As like a sirrocker he rolled, over brushwood and prairie
red hot :

Till he got ter the river ; I grazed him ; he tumbled,—
my hoss

Dropped from under, played out. I dismounted, and cross
Ter the stream ran, an' thar swimmin' out saw the priest,
An' he dove, an' he fetched up the kid, an' looked pleased,
As he struck for the bank, an' sot down my own child at
me feet,

The name of a fireman lately killed, he said, with an oath
on his tongue.

Nameless I thought, should his name be here; I felt it was
out of place;

My veins ran blood electric, and the choler rose to my face;
I only wished 't were in order to answer him there and
then,

I could prove the deep-wronged martyr was living a monarch
of men. [loud,

That winter night, I remember, the wind in its wail was
And the stony streets were sleeping, 'neath folds of a sleet-
snow shroud,

When the brazen clang of the fire-bell boomed from the
belfry shrill,

And the night's black soul was brightened by the blaze of
the burning mill.

Missed not the firemen a moment, each man was prompt
at his post, [flaming ghost.

Till clutched were two-score streams in the palms of the
As its arms were swung in a wild embrace round the waist
of a dwelling high, [sky,

And within, with its flame-food fed, rolled red to the dusky
Whilst there in the upper chambers, full fifty feet overhead,
Were groups of mortals imprisoned, crazed by the demon
of dread, [to save

Calling, appealing, and praying, for some one to aid them,
From the horror of fate which locked them there in a burn-
ing grave.

Raised were ladders, and rested on the frosty face of the
frieze, [seas.

And those that ascended were swallowed in swirls of fiery

They reeled and retreated, who dared not with the red
 Leviathan cope,
 Till sprang forth one to the rescue, with a heart against
 hope to hope. [lowered down,
 'T were act full worthy of Æneas; as each helpless was
 The ringing cheers of the people there, shook to its depths
 the town. [complete,
 But bruised and burned descending, his God-work entire,
 The charred walls toppled and crumbled, and he—was a
 corpse in the street;
 And if words from his lips had fallen unfit for the saints
 to hear, [tear
 Rest assured the recording angel blotted them out with a
 From the volume of life; and if there be grades in the
 spirit guild, [are filled.
 With the souls of the brave, I doubt not, the loftiest posts

MUNSON ISK.

A. COTTON-MILL IDYL.

YOU have lived in Lowell Town, twenty years or so,
 you say,
 And you've never heard of Isk, Munson Isk?
 Then your thirst for local knowledge has had very little
 play;
 Why, he's known as well as Butler, quite, in Middlesex
 to-day,—

Loathed by the children, as a snake or basilisk ;
Crippled, ugly, gaunt, and gray.

You 'd not care to meet him much,
Hobbling on his hickory crutch,
In the suburbs of the town, on a moonless night alone,
With his grizzled hair and beard,
And his parchment cheeks, time-seared,
And the bleared and blood-shot eyes,
Where forty winters' malice lies ;
A nomad, and a pauper, and a good-for-nothing drone, —
A withered weed remaining where a harvest-crop is mown,
Friend nor kindred near him none.

Isk was agent of the mill,
Was a churchman, and had given
Of his wealth with lavish will,
To clothe the heathen soul for heaven ;
Yet the operatives would tell
How a lost one loosed from hell,
In honor and in manhood would the hypocrite excel.

Such the sinful life he led,
So the social laws ignored,
That his wife had quit his bed,
And his children left his board ;
And when factory-girls saw
There was no redress in law,
For his insults rankling latent in their pure and noble hearts,
When their lovers would not aid,
And their brothers were afraid, [of his arts.
Then they banded them to shame him, from the practice

On September seventeenth, Eighteen hundred thirty-eight,
Where the sluggish Concord's swallowed by the noisy
Merrimack,
Floating in the flume was found, in a marred and mangled
state,
A murdered woman's corpse, who had met her awful fate
At a libid wretch's hand, in the silent night and black.
Swift suspicion singled Isk, but blind Justice fled the track,
For the Midas touch was great.

Isk received a note, couched in woman's dainty hand,
Which an interview besought at a stated time and place;
On arrival, he was ushered by a siren smiling bland
('T was at even), thro' a chamber to the presence of a band
Of determined little women, who had felt the deep disgrace,
And revenge in secret planned.

Now a criminal in court,
Hand and foot in chains, and shackled to a post,
A council straight was called, and the secretary read
From the records a report
Of the sinful life he led ;
When the leader fair arose,
Vengeance flashing from her eye,
Urged her sisters to propose
The culprit's penalty, —
“ Death is earned by the fiend,”
Counselled one ; “ let this hour end his life of villany.”

Then a young and queenly woman,
With a face divinely human :

"Best not kill the wretch outright; better torture him, or maim;

So his doting years reproach him with the gall of manhood's shame;

Let him of our justice taste:

Strip the viper to the waist,—

Whip him, salt him, burn his beard,

Be his frame in tar besmeared,

And cast him forth, the imps to fright,

That haunt the vapid caves of night";

When all exclaim, "This be

The wretch's penalty,

Our order here decree."

So the torture-tools in haste

Were prepared, while to the waist

Isk was stripped.

Then each in turn arose and laid

The horsewhip to his naked flesh,

Till cuts and scars in seams were 'rayed,

Like rainbows in a tangled mesh.

Before was never man so flayed

Nor whipped.

They bathed his bust in burning brine,

Singed his beard, and tarred him o'er.

Never did Helot cringe or whine

As Munson Isk, or suffer more.

When loosed his bonds, they him advised

What course in future to pursue,

'T was less than useless stigmatized.

As woman-vanquished, shunned, despised,
Bereft of manhood, aimless, through
The flume of life and flood of years outcast
He floats adown the current to the last,
Now nearly due.

THE LOST CHIEF.

THE snow-flakes fell thickly that day, and the thunder
Of cannon at play, made the red lightning gleam,
When the Poles had arisen, their bond chains to sunder,
And the blood of their slaughtered foes crimsoned the
stream.

Night came, and the elements sank into slumber,
Succeeded, dethroned by a venomous hoar,
That stilled the life-blood in the hearts of a number,
And froze to the turf those that lay in their gore.

The fighting hath ceased; Polish pickets were stationed;
'T was a terrible time to be out in the cold;
But vigilance great on that night was occasioned
By the treacherous deeds of the Cossacks of old.

Ere the dawn of the morning, the musketry's rattle
The mind of the soldier made action engross't,
And the outposts fled campwards, like terrified cattle,
For afar o'er the mountains their leader they lost.

Exchanging his sword for a musket, he parted
 His men in the vale, to ascend the rough height ;
 And the eyes of his soldiers, the tried and true-hearted,
 Never lit on his face since the dead of the night.

The weather-gauge pointed its index to zero ;
 The Poles were defeated complete near Cracow, —
 When one day, on the mountains, a Muscovite hero
 Found dead the brave picket, half-buried in snow.

Like the soldier obeying the order " Attention ! "
 He stood in a cleft of the snow-crested hill,
 His features unmoved by that wild apprehension
 That comes at the ebbing-out tide of the will.

When the bugle had sounded the shadowy muster,
 His breathing was chilled in a tumult of scorn ;
 His eyes were as bright as if life fed their lustre,
 And were fixed on the east, as if watching for morn.

CORMAC OGE.

HOARY bards had sung his praises ; 't was the custom
 then in vogue [Oge.
 To touch the harp to glory only, — Glory's son was Cormac
 Young in years, but old in valor ; oaken-sinewed, iron-
 framed ; [famed.
 Through the broad expanse of Erin for heroic actions

In a skirmish with the Saxon, by the Shannon's sloping
banks, [ring ranks.

While he conquered, was his standard tattered in the war-
When Omar's daughter heard the tidings, to the field of
blood

She despatched a herald to her to escort the unsubdued,
Who conducts him to the castle, leads him to the banquet-
hall, [wall.

Where ensign old and armor flecked each oaken-paneled
There the lady fair received him, garbed in robe of green
and gold, [of old.

Glorified in crimson blushes, — ladies blushed in days
In her hand she held a standard, waveless in the breath-
less air,

Presented to the boy-hero, speaking thus in accents clear :
"Take it, chieftain! it is due thee; this my handiwork
accept, [kept.

Which I've for the most-deserving many years securely
If the flag be torn in battle, but return its staff to me, —
I'll replace it." "Lady," quoth the soldier, "this I
promise thee." [ridge,

Blood-red that eve the sun retired behind the western
And on the morrow looked in sorrow on Athlone's bleak
bridge. [flank,

Two armies rife for vengeful war the peaceful Shannon
And chargers neigh, and leaders shout, and swords on
armor clank. [grass;

Now smoky-mouthed cannon blare, men fall like scythéd
The Saxon front advance upon the bridge they ne'er shall
pass.

The color-bearer in the conflict was laid lifeless in his gore,

And the standard towards the English camp the river's
current bore: [blow,
Which Cormac saw, and turned aside, nor dealt another
But dove into the water's bosom, rolling deep and swift
below. [guarded shore,
The wary Saxons saw his purpose, swam they from the
To which many were predestined never to return more.
There was slain their leader daring. Whilst attempting
his arrest, [on his breast;
Cormac plunged his dagger heartwise through the corselet
But o'ercome by dint of number, Cormac could not long
resist; [they list.
Bleeding and exhausted, to their camp they bore him as
Met they there their leader, Ginkell, who observed the
whole affair;
Thuswise he addressed the captive with a supercilious air:
"Boy, I have seen thy courage matchless; well I know
thy name; [disclaim.
Thou art pardoned for thy treason, if thy clansmen thou'lt
Here is gold; thou shalt lack nothing,— title, rank, I can
bestow; [show.
Join our cause, and to the ages history shall your prowess
I would do for thee a favor; thou art young, and thou art
brave; [grave."
Scorn my offer, and thy corpse ere sunset fills a narrow
Cormac's face was red with anger, from his eyes shot lurid
hate,
As he spoke such words as honor did to him dictate:
"Your gold and titles, churl, I seek not, never have I
sought,—
Freemen stand defiant, godlike!—slaves alone are bought.

If thou 'dst grant to me a favor, let me yonder banner bear
To Omar Castle, and I pledge my word ere sunset to be
here."

"Death's that favor, now," said Ginkell; "these fresh
graves that yawn agape
Will be heaped with dead ere sunset, — think not, rebel,
of escape."

"I have given my word," said Cormac, "but the worthless
word you spoke,
Like the dastard Saxon always, just as soon as uttered,
broke.

And death which in the morn I dared, why should I seek
at eve to fly?

I have taught ye how to battle, I would show ye how to
die."

[said
"Saxon may be found false-hearted, but 'twill ne'er be
That Ginkell ever broke a promise he had ever made.

Celt, thou 'rt free to go! for thy return, let thy word
suffice."

.
The sunset hour drew nigh, the time for captive sacrifice.
The bugle-call was sounded, the fated Celts were drawn
in line,

And the Saxon guard, with sighted guns, stood waiting for
the sign,

When, breathless, rushed up to the file, stood at his comrades' side,
[died.

Young Cormac, faithful to his word, and with his comrades
Stone nor shaft records his story, history has forgot his
name,

But the minstrel, ever mindful, turns its obloquy to fame.

WEDDING OF LULU DE BARRE.

IT WAS the wedding of Lulu, the loveliest one
Of the daughters of Baron De Barre;
And the knights, and the squires, and the gentry for miles
Assembled at Chateau Nevarre,

Where the festival was, and the sumptuous feast
Was prepared as becomes the *élite*;
And the arbors and bowers of tropical flowers,
Most rare, were a glory complete.

The ladies were charming; the gentlemen looked,
Perchance, just a trifle *bizarre*;
What matters? E'en culture bows humbly to wealth;
'T is the lack of the gold that's the bar.

Count Ketcha was handsome, and learned, and rich, —
All bridegrooms, you understand, are;
Especially, too, if they're noblemen, and
They reside in a country afar.

The guests praised the feast, were delighted, — why not?
There was naught there their pleasures to mar;
And the sideboard was freighted with choicest of wines,
At the nuptial of Lulu De Barre.

As the wedded withdrew to prepare to depart,
Towards the close of the feast, in a car,
Of the triumphal sort, as is custom, for go
To her new home must Lulu De Barre;

A rider rode up, and alighted, and stood
The vehicle's egress to bar ;
And they all said, " Too bad, that a guest should be late
For the feasting at Chateau Nevarre ! "

He drew from his bosom a parchment and read,
And the paper was sealed with a star ;
And attached the calash for the creditors of
The Countess, *nee* Lulu De Barre.

THE PHANTOM BARK.

ON Christmas night, by soft twilight,
As loud the winds did roar,
And the ocean spray, in wild affray,
Lashed on the rocky shore,

A maiden bright, attired in white,
Approached the cheerless strand,
And stood beside the rushing tide,
A picture pure and grand.

O'er the ocean wide, in gorgeous pride,
And breakers capped with foam,
She looked afar, where sturdy tar
In gallant bark doth roam.

She viewed the sea with searching e'e,
And thought of years ago,

THE END

When life was bright, for love's pure light
Enhallowed every woe.

That Christmas eve, ere he did leave
For scenes of strife his home,
O'er the ocean wild, of fate the child,
A mariner to roam.

When war would cease, he vowed, and peace
The Union should reign o'er,
He'd come in pride to claim his bride,
And leave her nevermore.

On Christmas night, when homes are bright,
Their wedding-feast should be,
As thro' the land joy doth expand
From Christianity.

She thought of this, and the parting kiss
Which from her lips he stole,
And of the years of grief and cares,
That since between did roll.

For five long years of woeful fears
She waited, but in vain,
Sad and forlorn, for his return
Home from the foaming main.

By a rugged ledge, near the water's edge,
She paused in sore dismay,
As a bark and crew came up in view,
Far out upon the bay.

Each spar was bent to fullest dint
By fierce and blustering wind ;
Each sail was spread, and straight and staid
Her course to land inclined.

Her speed is checked, still to detect
The purpose of the crew ;
The lonely maid there undismayed
The pale gloom peered a-through.

A boat is lowered, and straightway toward
The strand whereon she stands,
Is rowed by one, a true oarsman,
Who soon beside her lands.

He spake : " My dear, Sybil Despeere,
I've come to claim thee now,
For all your life to be my wife,
And so redeem my vow."

" O, fond love dear, for many a year
I've visited this strand,
Each Christmas night, by evening's light,
In hopes to see you land.

" I knew that you would still prove true
Unto the vow you made,
When you and I bade each good-bye
By yonder beechen glade.

" No home have I, no friends were nigh,
From morn to night I toiled,

Allotted heir to grief and care,
An humble orphan child."

"My boat is here, my bark is near,
No time have we to wait;
Out on the sea we'll married be:
The hour is growing late.

"Come quick, my dove, my own, my love!"
He grasped her slender hand,—
Soon in the boat were seated both,
And quick he sculled from land.

Fond words were passed, as o'er they crossed
The dancing billows' crest;
When near they drew the bark, her crew
With cheers did joy attest.

'Tis o'er their trip they board the ship,—
A blaze leaps from her deck,
And spread each sail; before the gale,
She speeds a burning wreck.

The blazing pile sailed on awhile,
As sailors shout and cry,
Till 'neath the waves all found their graves,
With myriads more to lie.

Each Christmas night, in pale twilight,
Is seen the burning bark,
And phantom crew with ghostly hue,
And motions strange and stark.

Fair Sybil's fate not one can state
For truth, but all do say
That this was how, to keep that vow,
Her life the bonds did pay.

The sailor brave who went to save
The Union when in need,
Three years before from life was bore,
Full famed by many a deed.





I N E Z .

A CALIFORNIA TALE.

HAIL unto thee, fair Empress of the earth,
Columbia ! where freedom had its birth ;
Where all are equal born, where all are free,
And worth sole title to supremacy ;
Where poor and rich equality may claim,
And energy's the stair which leads to fame ;
Where every one is free to have his say,
And hamlets grow to cities in a day ;
Where Liberty attracts Creation's gaze
Upon its bulwark, which no flaw betrays.

Lands at whose word Europa's framework shakes,
Would be but islands in thy crystal lakes ;
And mountains, if in other countries found,
Would leave them but a wonder-moving mound ;
Prairies, that, awe-struck, the observer chain,
Would make of other lands, a level plain ;
And streams, long, deep, magnificent, and wide,
Which float the inland products to the tide ;
Unbounded forests formed to correspond
Unto the peerless genius of the land.

O nation mighty ! theme for him to praise
Who therein filled the measure of life's days.

Columbia, 't is not my intent here
To eulogize what all thy sons revere ;
Their fathers' deeds, which brighter grow each year ;
Thy industries, and the honors they entail,
Thy telegraph and countless miles of rail.
My pen elects to rest not on thy praise,
But into pathways more secluded strays.
Far from the Eastern shore, thy bustling ports,
Thy cities' hum, and fresher nature courts,
In primal dress, in yon far, hallowed West,
Whose fertile soil the native labor blest ;
Where the Sierra's dusky summits rise,
And to the west, in gorgeous splendor, lies
That giant member of this giant land,
Whose rivers sparkling glide o'er golden sand,
And birds of gayest plumage rich abound,
The air ensweetening with their wealth of sound ;
There roams the wolf, and on the mountain slope
Rest the black bear, coyote, and antelope.
The wildest land the sun looks down upon,
Meet nurse for untamed beast and savage man, —
Our California now, once Drake's New Albion.
Here each is master, independent, free,
As God designed all human kind should be ;
And monarch's breath can never make a lord,
And if it could, 't were toil without reward :
For he is lord and camp-crowned ruler, too,
Whose frame is toughest, and whose aim most true ; —

Where man holds fellow-man, alone, in awe,
And justice is not meted out by law ;
And criminal such punishment must feel
As only may be dealt by hands of steel ;
And parson's prayer, and counsel's stilted speech,
Can never close a guilt-made, yawning breach ;—
Here, where the olden faith the Jesuit taught,
And civilization to the savage brought ;
The convent built, and raised the Roman cross,—
All ruins now, and overgrown with moss,
Whilst missions' good is vanished from the shore,
And grace of Christian creed exists no more. ·
'Tis Sabbath there, yet speaks no sweet-tongued bell,
The day of rest and piety to tell.
And if it should, none there would heed its call,—
Whose aim is wealth, his faith must needs be small.

The woods have just been newly robed in green,
That front old Cedar Camp, and fling dun shadows drear
Across the lonesome, wild, and craggy scene,
On which the stranger looks not without fear,—
Naught there the eye to please, nothing the mind to cheer.

Seeming a thing of medieval time,
Of stone and wood bespattered o'er with slime,
The camp itself—or cabin, fitter name—
Was built on what was once a paying claim.
Within it looked half home, half jail, half den,
Meet tenement for those rude, reckless men
Who now therein in groups divided, sate,
Engaged at cards, in song, or hot debate.

How like a remnant of some savage race
They looked, with scars upon each bearded face,
Their minds the mirrors which reflect what they
Of good or ill had met along life's way ;
And consciences, — these rigorous umpires fair
Are jewels such as miners seldom wear.
Of crime, the sin of theft they most ignore, —
God help the wretch who steals the miner's ore !
God help that wretch, again I say, for he
Is marked most surely for eternity !
And who in Cedar Camp that could not name
Himself entitled to well-earned fame, —
An arm a brother lost at Mexico,
And wounds from Cerro Gordo one could show ;
Of fierce Bull Run, another oft would think,
Who prostrate lay one day upon its brink ;
And one who looked quite quizzical and shy,
With Sherman at Atlanta lost an eye.
But old-time jars and hates were now forgot,
And each to each was linked by such a knot
As may be tied alone by common lot.

With such as played, or sang, or that were bent
On dealing out coarse wit for merriment,
I have scarce aught to do ; I deal with one
Who sat beside the battered door, alone,
Whose brawny arms and shoulders broad and chest
Betoken'd that he uncommon strength possessed ;
His face was bearded, bronzed with many a scar,
Denoting that he fought in recent war.
Thou 'ldst know his name : 't was Orren DeLamere, —

A stranger, such as knew him say, to fear.
In form and feature of our hero's stamp,
There was one other member of the camp,
Except that you this difference might descry, —
In Ramon blazed a hellish, fiery eye,
Whilst his, our hero's, beamed as soft and mild,
As if the owner were a prattling child.
Twin brothers they, and truest friends through life,
Inured alike to danger, peril, strife.
If foe on one the thirst of hate should slake,
Revenge most swift would th' other brother take ;
And if they had of sin and vice their share,
They never knew parental love or care.
A moon before they saw the light of day,
To grizzly bears their father fell a prey ;
And then the mother bade adieu to earth,
The night on which she gave the infants birth.
An aged trapper nursed them in the woods,
By gloom surrounded and deep solitudes ;
What wonder, then, if failings both possess,
Or from the ways of righteousness digress ?
What could they know of God or religion,
Who taught them what the Saviour, Christ, had done ?
What marvel if they had committed crime ?
Worse men, I trow, have oft been praised in rhyme.

A few short years their wondrous changes wrought,
And Orren is no more what once he was.
Conjecture rose in camp, and many a thought
Matured, was oft expressed, as to the cause.
Their words were wasted breath ; they held no key

To ope the barréd door of mystery.
Who there would think to question him begin?
The prying eye is not a digger's sin.
Yet all would learn, some said ; in fact, they knew, —
If guesses ever can afford a clew, —
For 't was to such their knowledge all was due.

When through the nation war's wild note was rung,
He was of those who, free, to arms had sprung,
Quick to defend the flag he ventured forth, —
The freedom-breathing standard of the North.
First was he that left the placer rough ;
He was composed complete of fighting stuff.
The army joining, under Little Mack,
He bore a part in many a fierce attack ;
And war, which winnows vices o'er a land,
As seed is scattered by the farmer's hand,
To him brought goodness, virtue, religion.
Not army-chaplain's preaching this had done ;
Could priest or preacher curb his stubborn will,
And in such heart the love of God instil ?
When war's dread notes died out upon the air,
Straight to the digger-land he did repair,
And sought his comrades out, in their retreat,
Where was performéd many a lawless feat.
Joy reigned, the night of his return ; all 'round,
Dull spirits were in sparkling liquors drowned ;
And he who erst was wildest of the band, —
The roughest, sturdiest miner in that land, —
When urged to drink, declined, and pushed aside
The proffered cup, and with a manly pride :

"I thank ye, pards ; I drink no more," replied.
"Not drink," they laughed ; "what mockery have we here?
Bah ! art thou not that Orren De Lamere,
Who, when he slew the robbers on the plain,
Drank his fast-failing strength to life again, —
Durst dare insult us with thy snivelling words?
Most here, as well as you, have toyed with swords."
"Partners, forgive me what I said, or say ;
We can be grave at times, as well as gay.
Events transpired we cannot well forget ;
Many a change occurred since last we met ;
That which I was, or am, 't is naught to you, —
A life of peace in future I pursue."
The boist'rous noise now from the table fled,
And that was all that night that Orren said, —
Rebuked at first for his uncamlpke ways,
But soon the mark for every miner's praise ;
His verdict was unquestioned in dispute,
His reasoning sound, his judgment most astute.
His manner changed, in time respect had won, —
Beloved the more with every rising sun.

There, as he reading sat beside the door,
An anxious look his sun-browned features wore.
Albeit his eyes were fixed upon the page,
It needed neither soothsayer nor sage
To tell, some silent passion of the soul
Was baffling all his efforts to control.
For him who would, 't was easy now to trace
A something painful pictured on his face.
His book fell from his hand with crackling sound ;

He cast a vacant glance the scene around ;
And, as by sudden impulse moved, he rose :
What he their once-more captain might disclose,
The miners ceased their mirth, intent to hear.
After a moment's half-unconscious stare, —
“ Camp-mates, perchance I ’ll not return this eve.”
He said no more, and thoughtful took his leave.

A serpent pathway o’er a jagged hill
He followed, moving hurriedly, until
The sun had set, and moon and stars were out,
When through a grove of redwood lay his route.
Then, like the miner’s lamp, which brighter glows
When farthest borne from the light of day,
Sweet hope within his bosom, glad arose,
Alighting up his rough and rugged way ;
But then despair would sometimes hope suppress,
And launch him on an ocean of distress.
Emerging from the gloomy mass of trees,
The scene was such as could not fail to please, —
A mountain to the westward reared its face,
A river wound around its fertile base,
A cañon to the eastward, and a road
Runs northward to a time-defaced abode,
While southward lies an irrigated plain,
Furrowed and crossed by many a golden vein,
And in the distance near a belt of oak
From Roister Camp ascends the curling smoke ;
Then opposite a mission’s ruins see,
Where Indians once met in piety.
Nigh to the road, beside an aged pine,

He paused to muse, on what, it ne'er was mine
To know ; but this I know, impassioned love
Fixed as the rock, imprisoned in his breast,
Pulsed every thought and was his silent guest.
Not that false love existing for a day,
Or till by fairer faces chased away,
Nor such as thrills the veins of city swells
At interviews with fashionable belles ;
But the pure love the favored few possess, —
A God-given gift his faithful here to bless,
Which soothes when life contains but gall and bitterness.
Some time elapsed, and moon and stars as one
Their utmost tried to rival-out the sun,
When near approached the woman whom he sought,
The beauteous idol of his every thought.
He scarce could move : the beauty of her face,
Her slender, stately form, the queen-like grace
Of every movement, held him there spell-bound,
Impinged him, mind and body, to the ground.
She moved beyond, her step elastic, light ;
A vision fairer never blessed man's sight ;
The Supreme Architect of life could not
Have charms more rare, or beauty greater, wrought.
Perfection was she, from perfection spun,
Half-angel and half-human, both in one ;
Attired most plain, — simplicity of dress
Doubles a lovely woman's loveliness ;
Her gems were not the tawdry things of art,
But diamond virtues set in a pure heart.
Fearless she seemed ; who does not feel secure,
With conscience clear, and heart forever pure ?

Surprised were all that that secluded place
Could dower woman with such wealth of grace.
How sweet the stillness reigning all around,—
Must it be broken by his voice's sound?
He dared not speak at first, but then at length,
When were returned his courage and his strength,
“Inez!” he called; how harshly from his tongue
Her lovely name in grating accents rung!
“Orren!” She spoke; right well the voice she knew;
Long friends they had been, faithful and most true;
The happy gaze, the hand's clasp, her sweet words,
Float on the air like music of the birds.
Then walked they on in silence, side by side,
Silence and love for aye were unified,—
For silence opes the entrance to the soul,
And lets the grand in nature inward roll.
Then when the earnest soul with bliss is filled,
The eye's made index to what's been instilled,
And when the eye hath spoken all it could,
The lips pronounce the words that organ would.
'Twas thus with Orren, when his eyes had spent
Their soul-lit light, he uttered all it meant:
“Inez,” he said, “to quit this land of crime
I am resolved, and seek some happier clime;
Far from this place, all tintured through with strife,
To live at peace the remnant of my life;
Whether 't is peace or turmoil I pursue,
In future time depends entire on you;
To ask you for my wife, this eve I've sought
Your presence here, in this secluded spot;
Dearer I love you than I love my life!

Inez, accept my hand, and be my wife!"
The while he did his artless love avow,
A cloud of sadness nestled on her brow.
"Orren," she whispered, "never canst thou know
The pain, the gloom, the misery and woe,
Your words convey, for bonds I cannot break —
And would not, were life's happiness at stake —
Tighten each day their unseen clasps, and bind
My will, my heart, each impulse of my mind;
A gulf divides us during earthly life;
This Heaven decrees, — I ne'er shall be a wife."
The miner trembled to his heart, to hear
So unexpected words fall on his ear.
He grasped her velvet hand, and held it tight;
Emotion filled his soul, and all despite
His wonted valor, as his friends could prove,
He was a coward in a scene of love.
"Inez! Inez!" excitedly he spoke,
" 'Twas you the slumb'ring passion first awoke
Within my breast, and is it now your will
Me with what you 've inspired in me to kill?
Yours is each thought, for you the golden dust
I 've hoarded up. Treat me not thus, unjust,
Unworthy though, I feel, I am of you, —
For I have faults, and crime committed, too;
A sinless man lives not, and never will
Until another Christ his blood shall spill;
Foredoomed to battle with temptation blind,
Who unto me had virtue's ways defined?
'Twas you, Inez, that pointed out the way;
'Twas you first taught my callous heart to pray;

'T was you who curbed my stubborn will of steel ;
'T was at your side, in prayer, I first did kneel ;
'T was you who grasped me from the jaws of hell, —
Your countless kindred acts I need not tell.
When in the Southern hospital I was laid
A prisoner, wounded, after Stuart's raid,
All friendless, dying slow in misery,
The kindest words 'tween then and infancy
Were those that from your father's lips did break,
'Daughter, attend this soldier well,' he spake ;
'*He* is a soldier.' Was I not awake,
Or did I sleep, and hear it in my dream ?
Is he who doth command your true esteem,
A better, braver, richer, man than I,
And is his love of purer quality,
His face less rough, his manners not so rude,
His motives with more honesty imbued ;
Is every act of his than mine more wise,
Has he no fault which he would fain disguise ;
Does he deserve the love withheld from me ?
He is my peer if he be worthy thee ;
But, O Inez ! before you do reject,
Consider, lives are blasted by neglect ;
It crushes every gift God gives to save,
Makes man a medium 'tween the fiend and slave,
Whose only consolation's in the grave ;
My heart is thine, pure woman of the West,
Subdue the fire that ravages my breast.
No ! Stern Medusa of the land of gold,
Who turns to stone all mortals that behold
Thy matchless beauty, by thy mystic eye.

Woman deceptive, cold, ungrateful, coy,
Compound of pity and celestial joy,
Designed by turns to please or to annoy,
Is loveliness for heartlessness a shield? —
In fairest form, is most deceit concealed?
Break not this heart! O say, you will be mine!
Inez, Inez, retract those words of thine!"

Her eye was moist, she scarcely conscious, sighed,
In tones, becalmed by sadness, she replied:
"Orren, we have long been fast friends and true
If man I loved, that man indeed were you.
What now you ask I have not power to give,
For 'tis for God alone, not man, I live;
These uncouth men I like that here are found,
Rough as the native oaks, with hearts as sound.
A hero did I seek, you had I sought,
Who deeds conferring greater honor wrought;
When hot, and fierce, and bloody was the fray;
How oft my father told me of that day,
When Stuart wheeled, and grazed McClellan's rear,
Whilst Northmen never dreamt of danger near,
Detached, surprised, a portion of their force
This, with the main, denied all intercourse,
They fought, and fell, by hundreds on the field, —
Some did, some would, but some would never yield;
The file, where captains fell, their places took,
As day advanced alone remained to brook
The furious charge of that wild cavalry.
By yourself led, one single company,
Captured or slain your comrades all, you stood

A Hercules in martial attitude,
And he who first out-roared, 'Surrender!' fell,
The second followed with a Southern yell.
Unranked they were. 'Not unto you!' you cried;
Rather than live their prize, you would have died.
But when an equal made a like demand,
You did surrender at his first command."
"Inez, he was your father; would to God
I lay a corpse that moment on the sod!
Then had been ended all my earthly woe;
These pangs from woman's wiles I should not know."
"Great wrong!" she said, "you do me and my kind.
Did you deception ever in me find?
Have I at any time, by word or deed,
Or any way attempted to mislead?
No, never, Orren, for my time on earth
Belongs to God,—belonged to Him since birth.
Within the cloister's walls at Monterey
The sun shall set a week from yesterday
For me, if God so wills it, there to spend
My days His service in, unto life's end.
Here we forever part; thou'dst not divert
Me from a course I never could desert;
Would'st know the reason, Orren? Listen, now:—
Before my birth, my mother made a vow,
That if the Lord to her a child would give
(As many years of married life were past
By such unblest), for Him that child should live.
Thus early had my destiny been shaped;
How had I from God's fixed fate escaped?
Then at the Church of St. Antonio, there

By parents thither led, I did declare
Before the Host, — before the Crucified —
That I for God would cast all else aside.
My mother long is dust ; my father here,
Who since the war has been your friend sincere.”
“ Inez, beneath the Supreme Will I bend,
Whose laws are such as man cannot amend,”
He said, and this, “ ’T was saved for you, this gift,
Begotten of long years of toil and thrift.
Accept it, now, ere we forever part ;
Take you this purse, since you reject my heart.”
He handed her a bag well filled with gold,
Of no mean size, and seeming somewhat old ;
The which she motioned back, and sweetly said,
“ A sister of the poor to wealth is dead.
Then bear it forth to them, to aid the poor,
Who in Christ’s sacred cause so much endure,
Who conquer death where thousands wounded fall,
And vanquish Satan in the hospital.”
“ Then I for God and them this sacrifice
Accept ; may He restore its value thrice,
Kindest and truest friend to mine and me.
Good Orren, leave me, this is misery —
Here let us part forever ; fare-thee-well !
When next we meet ’t will be where spirits dwell.”
“ Inez, farewell,” he spoke ; “ we part in sorrow,
But life is brief ; we’ll meet in joy to-morrow.”

They parted : then the savage anguish came,
Scoring his burdened heart by its mad flame ;
He leaned against a bold, grim-visaged rock,

Eyeing such sights as saw him but to mock,—
The azure sky low crossed by crimson bars,
The planets pure, the silver-crested stars;
The full-faced moon, with countenance sublime,
As smoothly running as Swinburnian rhyme;
The bulky-bodied oaks, the spirey pines;
The cedars old, their trunks concealed in vines;
Gray granite decomposed, the hornblende,
And lava, vomit of some drunken fiend;
The roaring stream, the cañon and ravine:
Nature in sterner mood is seldom seen.
No pity there, no sympathy thing,
Naught balm, relief, or solace sweet to bring
A wounded heart; his reason waxing dim,
For life appeared a bondage unto him;
His gloomy thoughts were checked by footfalls near,
The winds his name, too, wafted to his ear;
When from his stupid lethargy he woke,
He saw Inez's father near, who spoke.
A sinewy man he was, of goodly size,—
A great sombrero hid, above, his eyes;
A loose gray cloak his ample shoulders draped,
And in his hand a lantern oval-shaped.
“Why, Orren, here?” he questioned; “like a ghost,
Hue of the sand that lines the ocean coast.
Thou’rt sure unwell, if I from looks may guess,—
Lamere, what gives thee cause for this distress?”
“Mine is an ailment, Pedro, which the skill
Of doctors baffled long and ever will,
Beyond the range of Nature's healing laws,”—
Said Orren; then detailed entire the cause.

They heard, while yet in converse, stifling cries,
Woman's they were, which struck them with surprise.
"Ha, Pedro! that's her voice," Orren exclaimed.
The old man trembled, when her name was named;
His lamp spread o'er the wild a brilliant light,
Which made the stars look sickly from their height;
The echo of that voice their trusted guide,
They hurried on, sharp-eyeing every side.
Nor trusted they in vain to echo's aid,
For where the ledge stands like a palisade,
And feldspar boulders cumbrous abound,
And the mine's mouth yawns frightful through the ground;
Its architectural portals, grand of mould;
The fretted roof of granite, gemmed with gold;
Great columns, strange reliefs, along each wall,
Out-chiseled by the trickling water's fall, —
Upon this gorgeous temple's rough-hewn floor,
Inez was found, Life's weary journey o'er.
Scarce cold in death, she looked exceeding fair,
So sweet and pure beneath the lamp-light's glare;
Of violence no sign was there, no mark
Which might decipher the deep crime and dark;
Her hair, loose tossed, half veiling the pale face, —
A peaceful smile 't was easily to trace
Upon her lips, the silken lashes raised
Above the holy eyes which heavenward gazed.

The parent bent him o'er his child, and wept;
His tears were pure as those which devious crept
Beside him down the columns of that cave,
Shed by the lofty dome and architrave.

The lover looked bewildered on her form,
And grasped the hand, and kissed, just scarcely warm.
'T was now the love he bore her stood revealed,
His soul by passion shaken, dazed, he reeled.
As said, "Sweet flower of beauty, thou art gone!
Thou gentle tamer of the savage man,
Whose virtues charmed the mind and touched the soul,
While beauty held the heart within control,—
Cut down so young by some marauding thief;
Oh, but to meet the wretch! A small relief,—
For loveless life is barren,—day is night.
How sad in woe to brood on past days bright,
When good stars lingered in the horoscope,
And with the wealth of love, the gold of hope
My bosom thrilled; how chilling cold this pain
That bites my heart, and gnaws my tortured brain!
To gild the brow of death, saved I that dust,
And but to feed a murd'rous robber's lust.
Sere, blighted heart, break at these splint'ring shocks,
Break like the sea-wave dashing on the rocks,
Break like the rocket in its aërial pause,
But leave no charred thing to tell what was;
Burst like a whirlwind o'er some torrid sea;
Consume this frame, and end this misery.
O, Hope! we've long been friends; away—farewell;
What, wouldst thou stay? Can hope abide in hell?
Go, joy and pleasure follow in thy track,—
Go wheresoe'er thou wilt, but come not back!"
He ceased his speech; his husky voice was hushed,
And streams of sorrow o'er his memory gushed;
A pearl-like tear stood clear against his cheek,

Which ere the fount grew frozen, out did leak.
"Lamere, the loss is mine!" did Pedro say;
"What God has given 'tis His to take away.
Mortality unknowns the length or breadth
Of that tapered something betwixt life and death.
To-day we live; to-morrow no one knows
If we had been, — 't is thus this strange world goes."

They raised the lifeless virgin from the floor,
And to the camp in reverend awe they bore.
How pensive looked each face! along the way
How deep must misery on their heart-roots prey, —
Their silence spoke what speech could never say.

Wild words and song proceeded from the camp,
Decreasing not the least their spirits' damp;
How on their ears mirth's sounds, and music's, fell,
Most likely, reader, you yourself can tell;
What gloom it brings to think, when one is sad,
His best-loved friends are o'er extremely glad.

When they inside the cabin's threshold passed,
Surprised as if a cyclone's sudden blast
Shook the camp-walls, or bore away the roof:
By terror numbed they who seemed terror-proof, —
These inmates rough, sorrow, surprise, and awe
Were carven on their faces when they saw,
Plunged in the void of anguish, bitter tears
Sprang from the wells that had been parched for years.
Miners are only men, some reckless grown,
With hearts when touched of neither steel nor stone;

Her well they loved, whom now so much they mourned,
When wonderment had gone, and sense returned,
For axes, saws, and knives and nails they sought,
And soon a rustic coffin had been wrought
From sluice-boards, mixed of cedar, oak, and pine,
The which with their own garments they did line.
Therein they laid, with tender care, their pet ;
Was ever gem so rare, so roughly set ?
When morning ushered in the new-born day,
They laid the coffin lowly in the clay ;
Beside a cross, the mission's ruins nigh,
Its steeple ghost-white pointing to the sky.
And when the sodden earth was o'er it thrown,
Slow they departed, — Orren paused alone,
Loth yet to leave the scenes of gloom behind, —
Him grief pursued upon the wings of wind.

He reached his own wild camp, — his life-long friends,
Whose way with his most inharmonious blends ;
Some, pity for his loss had shown, but most
Cared little whether if he'd won or lost, —
For miners are not given o'ermuch to love ;
Gold and gain, instead, their passions move.
Of course there be exceptions, and if few,
They do excel as being eternal, true ;
How slowly crawled the dreary hours away !
Black night returned, less welcome than the day ;
With recollections grim its endless train,
Like living o'er his stormy life again,
Did Orren live that eve, but darkness found
Him by the mystic bonds of slumber bound.

A voice awoke him from his tired repose,
And with despatch he from his couch arose.
'T was Ramon's voice. This did his brother say:
"Here is thy gold; betake thyself away.
No, 't is not here, — the gulch, beside that tree.
Hence, get thee gone! curse thee, away from me!
Woman or ghost, human or devil, quit!"
"Assassin, thief, that crime thou didst commit!"
Did Orren say, as on him like a bear
He sprang, for once his dreamy eyes aglare;
His strength was taxed, but held him vise-like tight,
Whilst the roused camp procured a meagre light,
And bound him firm, for most his ravings heard,
From which that he was guilty, they inferred,
Of the twin crimes of murder and of theft,
And to explore the gulch some straightway left.

Beside an oak, late buried in the ground,
'That bane of all our ills, concealed, they found
The gold. When Ramon saw, he grew enraged,
And gasped and groaned like a fierce lion caged.
His trial followed and his guilt proclaimed —
"Hang until dead!" the sentence was they framed.

When morning dawned, safe bound they led him out;
Straight to a neighboring thicket lay their route;
There was the scaffold standing in the shade, —
A rough concern it was, and quaintly made,
Which on must Ramon suffer for his crime,
And Orren was made sheriff for the time.
This was the deepest wound, the fatal stroke,

That his grief-blasted heart completely broke.
Perchance it brought some solace to his mind,
The murderer of his love at first to find ;
But who is there to feeling lost so much,
That would not save a brother from death's clutch ?
And if in youth they both had erred the same,
Partners alike in vice, and crime, and shame,
Should he not wish the more his life to save,
And hold him from an early, shameful grave, —
But none might there a sentence passed remove.

It was a morning suited best for love,
The air all balm, the sky serene above ;
With in the east majestic Sol in view,
Each blade of grass bespangled bright with dew ;
The scent of herbage sweet perfumed the air, —
Dame Nature looked unusually fair ;
The birds made charming music, and the stream
Rolled down to ocean peaceful as a dream ;
The squirrel skipped about in pristine glee,
And humming fled the honey-seeking bee.
From that bronzed group no needless sound arose ;
Doomed Ramon looked the picture of repose,
Was firm of step, naught in his mien to show
The harrowing inward pain of gripping woe.
He speechless wrung his brother's hand, the while
Upon his features played a scornful smile.
Brave Orren was not proof against such scene :
He said (though his emotion he would screen),
"He's still my brother !" and the hot tears fell,
Thawed out by passion from each sacred cell.

The doomed one had no parting word to say
Before the spirit quit its home of clay ;
Unmoved and haughty, as he lived he died,
Unmoved his moods by any power, save pride.
When life's last lingering spark the body fled,
They lowered and encoffined laid the dead
Deep in the ground, at an old cedar's foot,
To be embraced by many a wiry root.
Since then, some hand has blazed the cedar's trunk,
The date of execution therein sunk ;
Above the date inscribed is this command,
More like a threat than just a mere demand :
" Let every man, who ever wanders here,
Pray for the soul of Ramon De Lamere."

Before the painful burial scene was o'er,
An ashen pallor Orren's features wore ;
To none he spoke, so sullen was his mood
That none dared on his gloomy thoughts intrude.
At camp arrived, he grasped his hoarded store,
Bade all adieu, and passed without the door,
And hastening to the river's ledgy bank,
Cast in the gold, which straight from vision sank ;
Where him his humor afterwards conveyed,
Not one who Orren knew, has ever said.

The miners from that region now are gone ;
Grim Time has laid his ruthless hands upon
Old Cedar Camp. One dusky wall still stands,
Grim frowning on the wild adjacent lands.



BELLARUS.

“**W**HAT doth startle thee, Bellarus?
prophet black-browed playing with the coals.
Red and hot and blazing; juggler,
are they not somewhat like human souls?”

“Aye, my son, that are they, wasting,
burning, waxing hot, and growing cold;
Embers, smoke, and ashes soon or
late the common mortal tale is told.”

“‘Clear of sight,’ the tribunes called me,
gave me gold and praised my wond’rous gift;
I a pilot, now a beggar, —
curse me for my blindness and unthrift.”

“They the modern Belshazzars;
I, the captive, where their skilled ones fail;
Tracing on the mural tablet
truths which craft, and greed, and theft assail.”

“Is’t a sign of blood, Bellarus,
thou beholdest brooding o’er the fire?
Is’t a nation’s blood, Bellarus,
spilled to mollify a faction’s ire?”

- "Something weird arrests the glitter
of your little shrunken, spleenful eyes."
"There is blood upon the hearthstone, [cries."
blood, and dole, and frantic shrieks, and woman's
"Look, observe you, those are malgoths,
they who crowd, and crush, and rob the poor ;
Models for the Shylock decade,
writing Hunger on the hundred's door."
"Falling, and the tribe upon them
all-repentless, mightier they than God ;
Mockery! their life's grip is as
strengthless as a slender golden-rod."
"Those are rail-gods, mill-gods, mine-gods,—
those great chunks that hiss and groaning drop
Down among the bloodless cinders,
but their ilk yet rise to lie atop."
"Burning, bright and brilliant, vortex,—
sucked these soon shall be to rise no more ;
They sink in blood, behold! it is
the million now against the score!"
"O, my country! O, my heart's blood!
I, thy offspring, with uplifted hand,
Call on God to shift the blood-cloud
visible above our fructive land."
"Jaundiced, darksome-souled Bellarus,
riddle-reading, living gloomful days ;
I, the Freeman, Toiler, Thinker,
set my strength against the ghost you raise."

"Doubting-Thomas, child-man, you would
see the wound and feel the red-lipped scar, —
Hear the cannon's roar before you 'ld
wake from dream of peace to sense of war."

"If the strength thou hast be man-strength,
battle greed by hand, and pen, and speech,
Till the laboring millions feel no
fruit hath growth beyond their labor's reach."


"Till no toiler genuflection
makes, face-fronting Mammon's upstart horde, —
Till no swart mechanic cringes
in the gaze of him, my money lord."

"Will you, dare you, strive thus? or like
others choose to head the Judas line;
Blame Bellarus not, he warns thee,
in the embers reading right each sign."

A TRAGEDY.

[*A Transcription from the French.*]

ACT I.

AN for a season his crimes may hide,
And the vengeance of God may be laid aside;
But in the end, in the criminal's path,
The sentence deferred will descend in wrath;

And if there be a crime on the face of earth,
'Tis the crime that causes a life-long dearth, —
A woman's seduction, and ruin, and shame,
To mother, and rob of a wife's fair name.
And the wretch proved guilty of such a crime
Is a living reproach to our age and time ;
He should die at the hangman's hand, — he should die
A death of disgrace and of agony.

ACT II.

Frederick Grere was a captain of horse
In 'Forty-two, in the Belgian force,
Stationed at Lille, where the captain met
With a lady of culture and wealth, and set
His devilish mind to ruin her life,
And he came out best in the awful strife.
His victim, exposed to the world's keen scorn,
Abandoned her home one December morn,
And never returned to her father's door,
And kindred and friends saw her face no more.
Bleak winters thirty filed slow behind,
In which many a heart was to dust consigned,
When one evening, as sunlight with starlight blends,
Grere, with a group of his chosen friends,
In Brussels, entered the grand saloon,
And engaged in a game of cards ; when soon,
'Tween one of his friends a dispute was bore,
And an officer young of the rifle corps.
Captain Grere took the part of his friend,
Insulted the man, and then at the end
Sent him a challenge, a duel to fight

With pistols. They met on the following night ;
When Frederick Grere shot his man through the heart,
And hastened home that he might depart
From the fangs of the law, to an alien shore.

ACT III.

A woman in black stood before his door,
When ready to leave, so he asked her in ;
Gloomy and sick with his weight of sin,
He scarce had spoke, when the woman in black
From her face drew her heavy veil aback.
The face was as palid as death, and the eyes
Fierce flashed with such light as revenge supplies.
When Grere saw the woman's face, he stood
Like a lassoed beast that was long pursued ;
Then retreated a step, and uttered a cry
Of horror that rang to the vaulted sky,
For the sight of that black-garbed woman in tears
Carried him back over thirty years.
There he gazed on the form of his victim of Lille,
And God but knows what the wretch did feel.
Threat'ning, death-pale, she advanced, and spake :
" Murderer, villain, and viper, and snake !
It were not enough thou shouldst ruin a maid,
And basely abandon, dishonored, betrayed ;
But the life, too, take of her luckless child,
Your son, in the heat of your passion wild.
Dream you such crimes shall unpunished go ?
Think you to triumph *par ciel*. No !"
When a pistol click on the still air broke,
And the room was filled with a cloud of smoke ;

Then a second report, and a groan, and a cry,
And the smoke cleared off, when you might descry
Two writhing, rolling shapes on the floor,
And their pain soon ceased, and they were no more.

Man for a season his crimes may hide,
And the vengeance of God may be laid aside;
But in the end, in the criminal's path,
The sentence deferred will descend in wrath.

THE LIZARD IN THE RUINS OF ROME.

[Translated from the French of Lamartine.]

IN the Colosseum's ruins, alone,—
Old pride of the Roman land,—
On the turf once blood-bedewed,
I sat with Tacitus at hand.

Of the Roman crimes I read,—
How the state at the block was sold,
And how man's pride to advance
The world in blood was rolled.

I saw th' idolatrous horde
The victors salute, and lave
Their eyes, on the ring, in blood
Which the gladiator gave.

Upon the incrusted wall,
Slowly did I translate
The marks of Augustus' name,
To whom 'twas dedicate.

But my gaze was distracted, just
As I spelled the initial sign,
Where brilliant shone Cæsar's name,
A Lizard slept on the line.

Sole heir of the Seven Hills,
Lone tenant of wreck time-stained,
Whose veins beneath are filled
With blood from the people drained.

He crawled from the broken wall,
With his joints benumbed by cold,
And to warm his emerald scales
O'er a blood-warm bronze he strolled.

Great Cæsar, once lord of earth,
Long held of the gods a peer,
Eclipsed is your greatness now
By the trail of this reptile here.

So time its Irony hath,—
I dropped the book from my hand;
Even thy genius, Tacitus,
Its ravage cannot withstand.

WOMAN.

ON earth, her place is to adorn
Her home, whate'er that home may be,
And from our lives extract each thorn,
And in our hearts plant purity.

To preach and practise every good :
If she will not, on earth, who will ?
That man may step where Christ had stood,
And for her worth refrain from ill.

To teach the child its way of march
In life, through all its devious ways,
And guide it up to heaven's high arch,
There to receive its wreath of bays.

Her genius, though the world admire,
Upon the platform or the stage, —
Woman at home we most desire,
To wilt the follies of the age.

A friend unto misfortune's heir,
Necessity will find her brave ;
When woeful death approaches near,
She lights the footsteps to the grave.

An angel sent from heaven to calm
Humanity's sore troubled sea,
To soothe the travailed heart with balms,
An angel, friend, and guide is she.

A MES PETITS AMIS.

L. H. FRECHETTE,

Poète Laureat du Canada.

BLONDS enfants aux voix argentine,
Frais comme un bouquet d'églantine,
Riants comme des chérubins ;
Si beaux sous vos robes oranges
Que l'on dirait un groupe d'anges
Nés sous le pinceau de Rubens

J'aime à vous voir sur la pelouse,
Sous l'œil d'une mère jalouse,
Courir comme des papillons,
Dansant sur les ailes de soie,
Peu soucieux dans votre joie
Du monde et de ses tourbillons.

Ah ! quand je vois vos fronts sans rides,
Vos teints roses, vos yeux limpides
Que n'ont jamais ternis les pleurs,
Je pense à mes jeunes années,
À mes illusions fanées ;
Helas ! sous le vent des douleurs.

O ! gardez votre foi si vivre,
Et votre innocence naïve,
Coupe d'ambrosie et de miel,
Fuyez une vie orageuse,
Et si votre mère est heureuse
Vous aurez votre place au ciel

[TRANSLATION.]

TO MY LITTLE FRIENDS.

L. H. FRECHETTE,

Poet Laureate of Canada.

Children fair with silvery voice,
Fresh as sprigs of eglantine,
Like cherubim you so rejoice,
Decked in your orange robes so fine
That you appear an angel band
Born under Rubens' master-hand.

Beneath a mother's jealous eyes,
I love to watch you on the green,
Skipping as blithe as butterflies,
Dancing on wings of silken sheen,
And careless in your simple mirth
Of all the tumult of the earth.

Ah! when your foreheads smooth I see,
Your rosy cheeks and crystal eyes,
Which never tears have dimmed, in me
The thoughts of younger years arise;
But dreams, alas! which did not stay,
By winds of sorrow blown away.

Your lively faith, O treasure up!
And unaffected innocence;
Nectar and honey sweet, a cup,
Far from a stormy life fly hence;
And if your mother's days are blest,
In heaven surely you will rest.

THE PLAINT OF THE FACTORY CHILDREN.

 *We are only factory children, poor and friendless, and must toil,*

And perhaps 't is wrong to criticise the rulers of the soil.

Perhaps you do not know us, just because that we are poor,
For you seem to have no pity for the hardships we endure.
We of pale and care-worn faces, of the red and swollen eyes,

With our feeble little bodies, and our sufferings and sighs.
We who leave our beds in winter, in the cold and cheerless morn, [and torn.

Long before the yellow sun does, and in garments thin
At the clanging bell-call wend us to our places in the mill,
Where we work at wheel and spindle that are never resting still. [wheels !

O, the grinding, grating gearing! O, the flying belts and
The bobbins on their spindles, and the spools upon their creels. [stench of oils,

Where the filthy air is breathed, surcharged with the
And the noise is like the ocean's, where the cliff its progress foils. [the poor,

O! your boards of health will tell you of the dwellings of
While these pest-pens of the wealthy lie beyond their range secure ; [day,

Where we little girls and boys toil, and toil, and toil, all
For the pittance that they give us, and we pine and pine away. [because

Till we're laid out in our coffins, and they'll say it is
At our homes have been neglected their wise sanitary laws.

But our homes are pure and healthy, unless where some
rich man's greed [feed.
Swallows all the land adjoining them, blind avarice to
The poor must live where best they can, we cannot choose
a site [and light.
In the high and pleasant places where there's plenty air
And we can't go, in the summer, to the mountains or the
beach, [reach.
All the wealthy children's pleasures are so far beyond our
Our pinched and bloodless faces scarce are brightened by
the sun, [done.
For we work when they are playing, and our work is never
O, you lady in your boudoir of luxury and sloth!
Know, our blood is in the filling of the fabricated cloth
That enwraps your stylish figure, and adorns your shapely
form, [the storm.
As our fathers in the home which gives you shelter from
O, the radiant smiling faces! O, the sweet and happy
eyes [comprise!
Of the joyful little cherubs which your younger world
You are charmed by their innocence, the music of their
mirth, [earth.
In its buoyancy round-floating, makes an Eden of your
But they scorn our walks and shun us, 'cause we do not
dress as nice, [ice!
O, the hearts within their bosoms must be colder than the
If they had to take our places only for a single day,
They would feel for us and cheer us on our hard and
cheerless way.
But their papas and their mammas would think 't was a
great disgrace

If their darling little children in the mills should take our
place. [bear to see

For they love their offspring dearly, and they could not
Them factory girls and boys, as we little folks must be.

But our parents love us dearly, just as well as they love
theirs, [cares.

And are kind to us and gentle, but they have so many
And the doctor's, and the grocer's, and the many mer-
chant's bills

Are so large that we must work and put our earnings in
their tills.

For our father's pay is little, and the money they should
get [debt.

Goes to line the rich man's pocket, so we're never out of
And we're hoping, always hoping, that a brighter season
nears, [years.

Till the days run into months, and the months run into
And the prospect grows no brighter, this we know by
father's speech,

That the golden times they looked for are flown farther
from their reach.

True, the indolent and lazy only keep our faults in mind,
Whilst unto our simple virtues they are religiously blind.

They have sympathy and cheering for the heathen far
away, [Cathay,

And the wealth which we advance them goes to China or
To extend the Christian mission, which were very well,
indeed, [need.

If there was not round about them such a host in sorer
So we think their Christian spirit will be worthier of praise,
When the instinct of humanity enleavens its display.

*But we're only factory children, poor and friendless, doomed
to toil,*

And perhaps 't is wrong to criticise the rulers of the soil.

For these wealthy are our rulers, though our statesmen,
when they speak, [Greek.

Say the toilers are the rulers, but such words to us are
For our fathers always tell us that the men they must elect
Are those upon the tickets which their employers select.

O, *they* know so much the better what our land of *freemen*
needs, [mortgage deeds.

For they've stocks, and bonds, and offices, and poor folks'
And it is so very kind of them to interest them so,
That they may increase their riches, while the poor may
poorer grow.

Since for poverty no act there is its limits to define, [design.
Whilst a law to hedge a rich man's wealth, they say, is in
O, we ought to be so grateful that we have such liberty!
Through the wisdom of our statesmen, O, how far those
men can see! [to toil,

*But we're only factory children, poor and friendless, doomed
And perhaps 't is wrong to criticise the rulers of the soil.*

BRITANNIA.

THINK not, O crone! thou canst fright us, fixed on thy
base of gore, [before.
For we've met, and defied, and curbed thee, many a time
Outliving thy breath, that was jealousy, malice, hate, envy,
and scorn,

And humbling thee more than once, till thou 'st fawned at
our feet forlorn. [were iron claws,

Thy hands we've wrenched open, to find that the fingers
And thy palms, gold-reckoned and burnished, blood-flecked,
and lined with flaws. [a knee

And grimy thy foot and cloven, with thy drapery caught at
Calloused from kneeling in prayer, — no, no! thy prayer is
blasphemy! [the breast

This comes of killing thy offspring, that's where it touched
Of the victims whose souls unshriven it sent to untimely
rest. [lust.

Britannia! scarlet woman, deep gorged with a gain-drunk
Making thy sister an outcast, grinding her children in dust.
Wheresoever thy flagstaff's planted, the land weeps blood
at the shock,

More free than the water by Moses summoned from
Horeb's rock.

Vain braggart! go boast to the nations, freedom of speech
and press, —

Freedom so long as it suit thee, freedom under duress;
Brain thou hast, but a stone encysted's the core of thy
heart,

The Furies smiled at thy birth, abortion of nature and art.
Massacre, pillage, coercion, writ in thy face we descry;
Bandit, bully, and coward, — Liberty! pedestalled lie!
Facing our wester-land, blind, through the light of Colum-
bia's star, [and war.

In the wake of thy tread forever stalked famine, and crime,
Proud of thy temple, doubtless, which wide arches over
thy head, [dead.

Buttress, capital, dome, enwrought of the bones of thy

Rare the historical painting limning each crumbling wall,—
Tyranny handled the brush, the canvas's a shroud or a
pall.

Bibles loaded with powder ; Bibles, infernal machines ;
Tracts as wadding for guns, which religion deftly screens.
Captives blown from the cannon, babes impaled on a
spear ; [rear.

Such are the subjects pencilled there on that scroll at the
On the left are chains and a gibbet, cross-bones, manacles,
skulls, [hulls.

Trade and commerce in coffins made from dismantled
And manhood's there, knocking for alms, broad-chested
and large of limb,

Where opens starvation the door, winged skeleton, gaunt
and grim. [right ;

A vision of ladies and lords, whose acres far reach, at the
Moths that bask in the sun-glare, whose breath is a curse
and a blight,

Piercing the heart of the earth, sheer down to the anthra-
cite mine, [pine.

Where women are harnessed to trucks, and in wretchedness
A lion dead lies in the front, which living creation defiled,
His head stamped into the slime 'neath the velvet heel of
a child. [helots fail ;

For here, despite lucre and craft, thy fame-triumphing
The metal that strengthens thy lance is filched from and
weakens thy mail.

And now all the races free-born are tolling the knell, of
thy doom,

For sentence is passed, and the sexton, Death, is preparing
thy tomb.

THE FALSE MINSTREL.

IN Ireland, in the olden days,
The golden time of that fair land,
Before the stranger came to raze
The peasant's cot with ruthless hand.

When chiefs, if History lieth not,
Were chosen as we choose them here,—
A fact which seems to be forgot,—
For franchise was not unknown there.

A beggar from some distant place
Knocked at the rulers door for alms;
The chieftain saw him, liked his face,
And warmly clasped his bloodless palms.

Clad him, housed him, taught him how
To touch the harp and tune the lyre;
A minstrel willing, gladly now
He waits upon his chief's desire.

At court and camp the honored place
He held, the whilom beggar, so
His gift his patron's board should grace,
He daily vowed, come weal or woe.

In lapse of time, the people's will
Installed another chief instead,
Whose soul, the minstrel sought to thrill,
To sense of former pledges dead.

The chief uprose and spoke, full clear
He read the fawning caitiff's heart:
"Minstrel! thou camest a beggar here,
And beggar shalt thou hence depart.

"Disrobe him, guards, and hie him forth,
Clad in the unclean garb he wore
When he came hither, little worth,
A beggar to our brother's door.

"For brothers we are all, and true,
Chieftain and clansman, great and small;
Who aye shall hold this truth to view,
Who's false to one is false to all."

LABOR.

OF Him I sing who gave us song,
The king thrice-crowned of pen and sabre;
Lord of the land and the wave so long
As he stainless stands in his own light,—Labor.

Who tunes to music all the arts,
Makes fair the waste, incult, and horrid;
Plucks venom from Life's poisoned darts,
Sets beauty on Pomona's forehead.

From Time's old face removes the veil,
Brightens the rusted brow of ages,
Re-limns the thought of years grown pale,
And 'graves their deeds on History's pages.

Unrolls the welded rims that gall,
And hold intact the ghost of faction;
Makes mankind one, and marshals all
The force that brings our souls to action.

'Twas he who plowed the Roman trench,
And fought the wars with heart heroic;
Made the steel-mailed m̄rauder blanch,
And framed the mind of Scribe and Stoic.

He raised old Ilion's storied walls,
Built the Babylonian garden;
Left, where the lazy Nile slow crawls,
Great Cheops in the sun to harden.

He roused old Ocean from her sleep,
And wrenched two continents asunder;
Drank with the Tritons of the deep,
With lightning toyed and forged the thunder.

He laid the keel and shaped the ship
That ploughs the green-soughed, stormy ocean;
He holds the power in iron grip
Which gives to mighty wheels their motion.

He climbs the mast, unfurls the sails,
In battle hurls the deadliest rockets;
At danger's post he never fails,—
His sweat is gold in others' pockets.

He hews the stone and builds the mill,
Rounds the column, carves the bosses;
Fashioning at his lordly will
Olympus, Pharos, or Colossus.

He sinks the shaft and works the mine
With hands of brawn, and grime, and callous;
Drinks the dark lees, and leaves the wine
To sparkle in some golden chalice.

He raised the cross that bore the creed,
And Faith's seed in time's furrow planted;
His name is stamped on every deed,
By every tongue his glory's chanted.

His voice is louder than the roar
Of Boreas in his moods of madness;
Restless as waves that tell the shore
The Ocean's griefs in throes of sadness.

If lovelier than the rest, one spot
There was in sacred, sin-lost Eden,
Fair Labor surely nursed the plot,
And dropped some choice selected seed in.

FOR WAR.

YOU, with your woman's ways, are free to censure
Earth's daring spirits whose transcendent star
Red blazed o'er battle, and whose chief Adventure
Imbrued his hands in many a feudal war.

You see in warfare, blood, and crime, and terror,
Havoc and pillage, till your spongy brain
Absorbs the lie, that martial strife is error,
And loss envelops all the wealth of gain.

You prate of carnage, tell how cities olden
Were sacked, and golden harvest-fields made waste,
Until the picture to your sight upholden
Grows nauseous to your artificial taste.

You see the blood of slaughtered hosts in rivers
The hill-sides lave, and flood the level plain,
Unmindful of the millions it delivers
From servitude and shackle, knout and chain.

You nickname war, Destruction; you'd prefer, sir,
To sing a roundelay, or wave a fan.
Had your mind ruled the time our days precursor,
Then man had never known the rights of man.

Destruction! Where upon thy face, O ages!
Trace we its wrinkle? — only godlike lines
Upon thy brow are found, the holiest waxes
Wrung from greed's palms, which God to man assigns.


You brood o'er Egypt's ruins, Babylon,
Sidon, and Tyre, and fallen Rome and Greece,
Blind to this truth, which Progress leans upon,—
If war were not, there never had been peace,

Man's rights, as oft the tented field are won on,
As in the Parliaments where statesmen feast,
For God has spoken by the blazing cannon,
As well as by the consecrated priest.

From every war-night dawned a day more splendid,
Wherein some superstitious idol fell,
Shattered by light, and souls long dread-attended,
With higher, holier aspirations dwell.

So battle plain, and siege, and wheeling column,
Are not your frightful conjurings to me,
But instruments most gainful, sacred, solemn,
Whose every essence breathes of Liberty.

FOR OUR COUNTRY.

ATCHLESS the halls of Imalo's palace,
Whose alcoves are peopled with breathing stone,
Immortalized mortals, who drank of the chalice
Of life eternal in æons flown.

There wisdom, and valor, and love are fashioned
By hands long dust, but their art remains ;

As the poet's soulful song, impassioned,
Outlasts the extinction of hoarded gains.

From a spacious dais, the great arch under,
Rises the figure for sublimest thought,
The people's treasure and the stranger's wonder, —
A mother and child in cold marble wrought.

On the base is blazoned, in golden burnish,
This, "For our Country," and the dress and mien
Of the sculptured duo, for the tourist furnish
A longing to know what their lives had been.

.
Great was Imalo, the king, whose legions
Through broil and battle brought him booty great,
But the while his soldiers fell in distant regions,
Their wives and children met the beggar's fate.

The ingrate ordered of the great Silenus
(The foremost sculptor of his realms was he)
A work as perfect as the Milo Venus,
And he hewed him the "Conscript's Family."

The soldier's wife and his child forlorn,
Wrought to the life in their want and woe,
Which Imalo seeing, swore should ne'er adorn
His halls, and Silenus to death must go.

.
The lie falls flat, whilst the truth once patent
Needs stay nor prop, but shall stand alone;
So the sculptured truth marshalled might long latent,
And Imalo fell, and his house and throne.

And the people reign, and the stone unbroken,
Thus unlike Venus, and more faultless too,
Crowns Imalo's art halls, an eternal token,
And a truth-ideal held to constant view.

RETROSPECTION.

I ONE, o'er the bars of sixty winters leaning,
And silent, looking down,
I wait the unfolding of the mystic meaning
Of Cross and Crown.

I see Youth's golden sun through chinks instreaming
Of Memory's ill-calked walls,
And catch a vista of the days spent dreaming
In Fancy's halls.

When Hope the future's Pantheon was gilding
O'er arch and capital,
And Spanish castles many high up-building,
Soon doomed to fall.

Then paced I fructile fields of others' growing,
Gleaning unsatisfied,
Beneath their seed a deeper thought-seed sowing,
Which yieldless died.

At twenty, thirty years should crown my longing;
At thirty, ten years more;

At forty, what? and fifty years came thronging,
And now three-score;

And I'm no more than worn and wave-tossed sailor,
A wanton mutineer
'Gainst fate, which hither hastes, with Death, the jailor,
To find me here.

To fame unknown, so soon shall I lie sleeping
A gruesome grave within,
Where praying near comes none, and no one weeping,
Or friend or kin.

And now I question why, in Life's fair morning
Illured ambition's light?
An *ignus fatuus*, black-cowled with scorning,
And gloom, and blight.

While before others, fame and honor bearing,
Bowed the full-handed years,
They filed slow by me, where I wept despairing,
To mock my tears.

'Less at my birth some swain of Fortune's wooing
Jilted the fickle dame,
I cannot guess the cause of her imbuing
My days with blame.

So, o'er the bars of sixty winters leaning,
Aimlessly looking down,
I wait for time to solve the mystic meaning
Of Cross and Crown.

"FOLLOW ME."

GOLDEN lines of light float downwards
To the misty, concave sea,
Which imbounds the farthest vision
Of Mortality.

Where, high linked to stars of silver,
Droops a sheeny veil more fine
Than Pallas spun, for its rare texture
Is of weft divine.

From the cities, vales, and mountains,
Every arc of circling land,
Mortals seek to gain admittance
To the veiled strand.

Clamorous, silent, certain, doubtful,
All creation constant strives,
Priest and pauper, prince and tyrant,
Lazarus and Dives.

Many blindly changing courses,
In their road despair and dread,
Loom and move forever, blocking
Every rood they tread.

Till at length the veil upholding,
Christ, the Saviour, stands revealed,
Pointing to a plain inscription,
Blazoned on an azure shield.

When the multitude, harmonious,
Moves along in ecstasy,
And the words which give them guidance,
Simply these are, "Follow Me!"

CHRIST'S CHURCH.

FROM conflicts fierce thou comest with th' armor shining
Thou 'st borne through th' ages down,
Thy many million faithful followers twining
A garland for thy crown.

Surviving long the bodings of false teachers,
The oracles long dumb
And silent, as the Pagan school, whose preachers
Against thy lance had come.

The impious hand that in thy childhood smote thee,
The lip that falsified,
The envious heart and poisoned pen which wrote thee,
What all thine acts denied, —

Are long forgot of every unblind creature,
While thy first martyrs loom,
Each coming day, more fair of form and feature
O'er *their* predicted tomb.

Thine aisles are ages laid through Time's expanses,
Thy dome the bounds of space,
Thy sacred sign past science fleet advances,
To cheer the human race.

Thy spire's the index finger to salvation,
Which ever God-ward points ;
Within thy lines is known not rank nor station,
Thy chrisms each child anoints.

Thy bells have struck the birth and death of nations,
Thy sweet and sad-toned bells,
Which fill the void with holy invocations.
Wherever votary dwells.

E'en who hath strayed without thy golden portal,
For whom *no* faith suffic't,
Felt that thy mortal temple was immortal, —
Thy faithful spouse, O Christ !

Still on ! fair craft, through oceans of aspersion,
Defying each storm and gale,
Relaxing not thy Atlas-like exertion,
While erring ways prevail.

The past's a speck beside the years to meet thee ;
Thy future has no bounds ;
Alone, supreme, thou'lt meet the hosts to greet thee,
When the last trumpet sounds.

NIGHT IN THE CITY.

THE moon sails slowly through the dark void, wheeling
Her sober paleness calm o'er oceans down ;
Gemmed round by stars in prayer, white vestals kneeling,
For grace to shed on mountain, vale, and town.

Beneath the slanting rays of one gray cluster,
Hill-flanked, steep-sloping to the harbor's marge,
Where nightly, ghosts of untimed victims muster,
Lieth the town to-night they hold in charge.

The long procession erst which trod its highways
Of honest, rugged, iron-sinewed folk,
On lowly couches housed in courts and by-ways
Lie slumbering, heedless of the morrow's yoke.

The grand parade of gold, and pomp, and glitter
That thrid the walks throughout the busy day,
And moths which in the glow of gaslight flutter
Have mostly laid their gauderies away.

Once more is fashion's plumage gay, discarded, —
Would that her follies were dispensed with, too ! —
Her loathsome garrisons and forts bombarded,
And sacked the sources of her revenue.

The lamps are out, the marts of trade deserted,
The thrifty trader dreams of gain and loss, —
Yet they, the low-browed Molochs disconcerted,
Their poison pass the marble bar across.

The stately streets and squares are vacant, lifeless,
Save where the night-watch plods his weary round,
Whilst out the hush of death, so solemn, strifeless,
Uprises one long, doleful wail of sound.

The voiceless wharf-pier, speeched, could tell its story,
Or yon maimed hound that howls in monotonies,—
How the garroters flung their murdered gory
Into the sea, to choke his tell-tale groans.

The faithless watchman, argus-eyed, on duty,
Passive, observant, glides upon the scene,—
Pockets his share of the ill-gotten booty,
And goes, for guilty deeds a bonden screen.

There to the sweet, weird strains of music, harken,
Circe's lewd laugh, and hollow mirth of rogues;
Mark, as foul folly's reservoir doth darken,
How in the square its life-stream dissembogues.

In part now lost, where brilliant lamps embellish
The outward porch, and broad interior hall,
Exhuming monsters of its orgies hellish,
Which uncreated life shall yet appal.

There starts the sluiceway to the sink infernal,
Where infant reptiles, sprawling down its bed,
Leave their rank spume to stench the years eternal,
And foul miasma o'er creation spread.

Yon prowls the wolf that gnaws at vitals greedy,
Its game those famished children, crouching there
Beside their parents, care-worn, workless, needy,
'Lorn flotsam-tossed on th' ocean of despair.

Within the holy chambers of that hovel
Is born a life ; and near, a life expires, —
This soul to bliss, and that on earth to grovel,
'Mid excrescence of filth and low desires.

In yonder garret, where the dim light 's burning,
Alone with midnight and her needle there,
A pale-faced girl is scantiest pittance earning,
Which yet with needy neighbors will she share.

Where in the flood the bridge's arch is doubled,
A frail one, weary of her shamed life led,
Has sought repose, behold ! the waters troubled
Smooth the dark folds of her cold, curtained bed.

Into the vessel's hold the wharf-thieves burrow,
And, plunder-laden, ply the muffled oar,
Till soon the boat rocks listless in its furrow,
Its crew by Charon borne to Lethe's shore.

From crime-gorged night, and woe, and pleasures bestial,
And carnival of imps, that sceptred sway,
Retires disgusted, the pure orb celestial,
And from night's womb leaps forth the infant day.

THE "MOTHERLAND."

A PHANTASY.

IN the queenly cordon of lands uploomed
One fair of forehead, but of gory hand,
Who to tyrannize over her mates presumed,
And is crushed by the force of the laws she planned.

Strange troops stand ranged round her rocky coasts,
With torn banners of gold and green,
Enshrouding the loins of her henchmen's ghosts
That long had haunted their homes, I ween.

And she, the land of that sprite, runs out
Her skeleton fingers bony and bare
Through the wild seas' tissues, feeling about
For succor, but finds not a morsel there.

The fleets she sped to each distant port,
Sail back not again o'er her harbor's bar,
For Neptune hath summoned each barque to court,
To answer for many a martyred tar.

Lone the last of her warriors coffinless lies
In the wilds of the jungle, not even a shroud
The putrid mass in decay to disguise,
From the vultures a-flock in a lowering cloud.

Her quays are all dark with her merchant craft,
Their sheets a-rot in heaps on the decks,
And ratlines all broken, and fore and aft
In slime down sunken, mere worthless wrecks.

Her friends have all folded their tents and gone,
Bag, baggage, and stake are safe in their forts.
Deserted, 'twas thus that herself had done,
Deceit was the bulwark of her resorts.

They heard the voice from far over the sea,
The auger-worm of the new world's thought
Is set in their bosoms, and Destiny
Hath scattered the idols their fathers wrought.

So prone on the ground lies the crone in death,
With never a lip to bewail her fate,
And the world respires with a freer breath,
And Liberty laughs from her heights elate.

HER "INGRATITUDE."

AS THE MILLER SEES IT.

"**R**AIKES," she called, but Raikes was dead,
With a clot of blood on his grimy face;
His arm, too, wrenched from the shoulder bled,
And I had n't a man who could take his place.

The crazy woman, his wife, she kissed
His ghastly lips, and wept while I
Stooped to examine a card that hissed;
And a broken belt that was lying nigh.

I took my Faber, and summed the cost
At three round dollars, and that was low;
She never dreamt of how much I'd lost,
'T would seem that hers was the harder blow.

I lent her a man and a cart to bear
To her home her dead, though it took an hour;
A mill don't often a workman spare
When speeded and pushed to its utmost power.

This which I say but goes to show
How thankless the toiling folk can be;
She lisped as I paid her, a something slow
Which was n't, however, a prayer for me.

But she got her due, and his, just less
The time she lost, and the day he died,
And for use of the man and the cart; I confess
I fail to see where the figures lied.

THE VETERAN.

HIS is the awful form that comes a-near,
Enveloped in the sable shroud of woe;
Wouldst seek his presence now? 'T is night, or wait
Till bright illumines the morrow's sun, belike
You'll recognize a brother, whom your greed
Ambition, selfishness, or lust, hath made
That which he is. Fear not, but come with me,

Beneath the focus of your mind's fine glass
I'll show you him.

Yonder he comes, ill-shod,
Clad in old garments, tattered, filthy, scant,
Unkempt his hair as refuse weeds that flank
A snag at ebb-tide in the creek's foul mouth.
His eyes in rusty sockets set, like globes
Of molten fire revolve, surcharged with hate
Repulsive, and his teeth awry, and rank
As blotched gravestones in the gales of March.
His edgy chin on hunger's wheel concaved,
Spun round in shifts, by folly, want, and fraud.
In very form the wire-locked manikin
Of some gaunt giant corpse, new-motionized
By some fell power to set the world a-scare.

You choose to know who this grim sprite may be,
Whose heart and soul are pestilence and plague;
Whose tongue is fire, and hand, the bloody knife
Which in the black night slits a brother's throat,
Whose breast for evil done feels no remorse,
But like a cesspool gluts on garbage foul,
To pay its debts with filth, disease, and crime.

He was not always thus; in his young day
Were just as much of sun, and soul, and hope
As were in yours or mine, — nay, even more;
All that a heart could wish for here was his,
Till when the war-cloud darkened all our land,
He with his troops accomplished valiant work
At Fair Oaks, Malvern Hill, and Antietam;

And bears grim scars from those and other fields
Where he forlorn hopes to glory led
Until disabled by a sabre-stroke.

For him, the mother he so fondly loved
Has not in her vast treasury one gift.
O, nameless shame! was mother e'er so base
As thus neglect a child who loved her so?
While broods of sleek-lipped leeches lap her blood
With tongues usurious, drawing from her breast
That which they had not manhood to defend.

HER ANSWER.

I HAVE listened to your pleading,
Seeming free from guile or art;
Heard your warm lips softly reading
From the volume of your heart.
I have seen your soul's emotion,
I have learned your deep devotion,
Yet must move alone, apart.

Lie between us barriers golden,
Bars which fate cannot remove,
Our age is not like the olden
Age when all succumbed to love;
Now the codicil of station
Voids the will of God's creation,—
Gold all else is lord above.

Love and fashion flow together
Smoothly from their mated source ;
Unmatched will you answer whether
Both shall blend along the course,
You adept in skill of reason,
Comes there not a wintry season
When love's frozen by remorse?


You would take my hand, to clasp it,
While your love your passion calms ;
You would hold my heart to grasp it,
Whilst your own found there its balms.
But your gay world shouts "Mistaken!"
In your ear, and you awaken,
And my portion is your alms.

You would blame me, then, and chide me,
Secretly perhaps, at first ;
For assumption you'd deride me,
Till regret in darkness nurst.
Lightward sallied from its hiding,
Married there were no abiding,
And our union were accurst.

Fashion smiles upon you, waiting
For the proffer of your hand ;
Happiness I wish you, mating
With the fairest in the land ;
Love were yours ; best love of woman,
All the wealth her soul could summon
Well might wait at your command.

But I spurn such luckless union,
Scorn to live in slavish ban ;
You with yours must find communion,
I with mine ; some humbler man,
Perchance, some day, may come and deem me
Worthy, and for life esteem me
More than fortune's favorites can.

THE CITIZEN'S DEFI.

E can make or unmake thee, monarch, man-god as
thou deemest thou art ;
We hold the key to thy office secure in the depths of our
heart.
If thou thinkest thyself greater than we, we challenge thee
hence to the test ;
Know, we bear on our person the weapon which soonest
thy boast shall arrest.
'Tis the franchise received from free fathers who learned
to fence without gloves.
'Tis the mightiest weapon on earth, the bright blade the
proud citizen loves.
When aspiring to rule, it is best you consult our high will
in the case ;
If you fail, you're retired to the rear, and your brow bears
the stamp of disgrace.

OCTOBER.



BARREN and bleak October!

Month ever sombre and sober,
Thou bringest pale death to the door,
Thou hurlest the wreck on the shore.
A mournful wail is the roar
Of thy breeze through the trees, October!
Nude, vagrant, thy features betoken
The bankrupt, food-famished, health-broken.
Month of my hate, take my curse,
My wrath for thee e'er shall I nurse;
Let thy fawners for favors reimburse,
Thou hold'st not the strings of my purse.
Time to grieve, take thy leave, I have spoken.

WHEREFORE?

IT needs resort to Venice, nor to Rome,
To London, nor to Paris, for a scene
To touch the heart of the philanthropist.
So, if you be not blind, indifferent,
Insensible to pain, to want, and woe,
Misfortune and calamity, and all
That moves to sympathy the human breast,
Encase yourself in furry coat, and gloves
Of buckskin lined, and don your warmest cap,
Lest freeze in your blue veins the crimson blood,
For it is cold and chill and drear without,—

And venture with me into yonder street;
See through the drifting snow that object there,
Lone kneeling on the icy curb-stone down.
His all, the crutch beside him on the ground,
And th' organ whose stiff crank he turns all day;
And every note that breaks upon his ear
Must pierce his heart with agonizing pain.
He pauses now, to beat his frosty hands
Against his breast, and now resumes again.
His clothes are old and faded; once they were
The color of the background of the stars
Upon his country's flag, the tinture of
The grand ethereal concave field above,
Star-spangled, too. A card enframed against
The organ hangs. Approach and read. You'll find
The tenor and the substance most-like this:
"This is to certify that Edward Young,
A man of thirty years, six feet in height,
Complexion fair, brown hair, and hazel eyes,
Who was disabled at the Wilderness,
Wounded at Shiloh, Vicksburg, and Bull Run;
Engaged in twenty several battles fixed,
And broke his fast at Libby and Belle Isle, —
Has been discharged from further service in
The Union Army," — this is its whole gist.
Unpardonable shame, ingratitude
Too beastly base for a barbaric age,
To cast adrift this shrivelled shell, all scarred,
That worn, dismembered, crippled frame, to beg!
That skeleton, with joints bestiffed with cold.
'Tis terrible! If ancient Greece or Rome,

Or any land, in any age, but this,
Could call that shattered hulk her citizen, —
A mound surpassing Marathon, a shaft
Colossus, Coliseum, Pantheon,
Some giant pile would loom to honor him,
And he would be a lion, not a worm,
Who swapped for mis'ry, freedom, health, and joy.


FLASH, FLASH, FLASH!

FLASH, flash, flash!
Flash like a midnight star;
Your flame is dead,
Your worth is fled,
To me you valueless are.

Shine, shine, shine!
Shine like a midday sun;
The ray I prize
Is n't in your eyes,
The light that my heart hath won.

Rage, rage, rage!
Rage like the roaring sea;
The wealth that you hold,
Nay, Cræsus' gold
Could n't purchase my heart for thee.

THE SEA-SHELL'S SONG.

 HERE mother ocean slakes her thirst
In the blood of the land, the crystal river,
And smacks her lips on the reefs accurst,
Till her flaccid cheeks grow full, and burst,
And the sails that slept on her bosom shiver.

Two children, eager, a sea-shell sought,
And found one washed on the rocks, and placing
The jewel of silver and pink inwrought,
To the ear, one listened, if the herald brought
From the seas of her father tide or tracing.

"What sayeth the shell?" asked Tom of Jane;
"Is it good news, or bad, we will bear to mother?"
"Brother, it sings in a joyous strain,
But there's something sad in its low refrain,—
Place the shell to your ear, and tell me, brother."

"It says that the sailor is safe in port,
Where waves are calm and shores are golden,
And storms arise not of Neptune's sport,
And flotsam and jetsam and things of that sort
Are never by breezes or billows rolled in."

"O, you dear good sea-shell!" the sister said,
Kissing the waif; "let us haste home, brother."
With the good news jocund the children sped,
And they told the news, and but grief they read
For joy in the face of their mother.

LONGFELLOW IN HEAVEN.

IN celestial fields elysian,
Where is everlasting life
For the weary spirits ransomed
From earth's prison-house of strife;
Where the sages, priests, and poets,
Fathers of the thought of time,
And the good, the true, and valiant
Move, a galaxy sublime.

There, as through the vast enclosure
Did the herald's trumpet ring,
Telling how approached their portal
Now the age's poet-king;
Hushed was every strain of music,
Silent grew each tuneful band;
Every master paused to welcome
Hither him who held command

O'er the sweetest waves of music,
O'er the hearts and homes of man,
O'er the loves, and joys, and pleasures,
Which earth's circling planet span;
Homer, Virgil, Shakspeare, Milton,
Pindar, Byron, Shelley, Poe,
Dante, Bryant, Scott, and Southey,
Campbell, Chaucer, and Rousseau.

Goldsmith, Dryden, Pope, and Wordsworth,
Burns, Keats, Schiller, Goethe, Moore,
And a host of brilliant singers

Waited at the golden door,
For the prince, the king, the idol,
Nearing now the mystic scene,—
Him who sang of Hiawatha
And the fair Evangeline.

Him the mighty cohort greeted,
Greeted with his Psalm of Life,
Till with wealth of sweetest music
Was the heavenly mansion rife.
Each to him his station tendered,
Offered him the laurel-crown,
Pressed him to accept the places
Highest and of most renown.

But a group of children, playing,
Caught the noble poet's eye,
And an angel paused before him,
Saying, "Singer, sweet, on high,
Since Creation have we waited
For a poet who hath known
That earth's children are the cherubs
Who attend God's highest throne.

"Deign to be *our* heavenly mentor,
Singer sweet, of gentlest soul!"
And the poet thanked his brothers,
But the children held control.
So the brilliant band resigned him
To the choirs of youth and love,
For their membership outnumbers
All the blessed ones above.

FLOSSY.

AT the gate of the glebe, sylph-fair,
In the moonlight waited Flossy,
Russet her cheeks, and her hair
Brown as a chestnut, and glossy.

Whom is she waiting for there,
At the moon and the stars up-gazing?
Is she longing for some one to share
The beauty above her blazing?

They told me, the moon and the stars,
The jealous maidens above her,
Who glide in their golden cars,
Young Flossy is waiting her lover.

He never looks up to their eyes,
For brighter are Flossy's, and fairer
Than any bright gems in the skies,
And her love, too, is purer and rarer.

IF God meant a man should be known by his clothes,
Why did He create him stark naked? No doubt
A tailor was needed God's work to lay out;
Some measure mankind by the yard-stick of self,
And reckon pure worth but in tangible pelf,
By the inches their tape-measure minds may disclose.

WIFE AND MOTHER.

THERE is a green grave on the banks of the Dee,
Where cowslips, and daisies, and wild clovers blow,
Long locked in its bosom lies one who to me
Was more dear than all gifts which a king could bestow.

He was last of his line in that land, if to pray
For his spirit's repose at his grave doth attend;
A mortal, I know not, but long leagues away
One his soul to God's mercy doth daily commend.

Why doubt it, I know! for I feel that each dawn
The lark pipes a hymn to God's throne for his soul,
And the shepherd who steps softly-light, as a faun,
Prays for all for his faith, as his virtue is whole.

The ring that he gave me, the word which he spoke,
When the church linked the bonds made of lightness and
strength,
Are treasures of heart that forever evoke
Affection to last throughout life's dreary length.

But the treasure of treasures he left me, our child,
The blood of his blood and the bone of his bone,
Where the Merrimack mumbles its murmurings wild,
Lies a-near in her grave, to his kindred unknown.

Where the whir of the spindle, the click of the loom,
As the shuttles are sped through the intricate warp,
And the jingle of bells gives a foretaste of doom,
And the steam-whistle shrieks in its accents so sharp.

There she lies fast asleep, and I soon by her side
Shall find rest, for I know that my love o'er the wave
Shall come as thought comes, for, though heaven be wide,
It has not in its confines the room for a grave.

WHAT MIGHT HAVE BEEN.

HE played his childish pranks,
Was mother's joy
And father's pride;
In game and class he won the highest ranks,
Was truthful, brave, and emulous beside.

No change fame in him wrought;
He felt his way,
Outstripping far
His rivals in the race, and each day brought
Resources new, to wage ambition's war.

He culled from books and men,
Of knowledge true,
He sucked the juice,
Which he employed most skilfully again,
If history's truth, and turned to golden use.

The world its richest crown
Placed on his head;
A leader now,
Earth's throat is hoarse with shouting his renown,
And whilom foes his worthiness avow.

His land late recognized
His worth, and made
Him chief, true type
Of scholar, soldier, statesman, who comprised
All elements of greatness sound and ripe.

Or would, had he not died
(Which death the cause
Lies yet in doubt),
So young, that even light he was denied,
And only one his grave knows aught about.

THE KNIGHT OF MAKE-BELIEVE.

YOU'VE met him in the marts of trade,
You've seen him in the bustling streets,
In sylvan ways, in the cool shade
Of monarch maples, him you'll meet ;
For he is everywhere, this man
(Around whose brow my verse I weave),
Of beaming eye and velvet hand,
The doughty Knight of Make-believe.

He's reckoned haughty, yet is he
So easy of approach that all
The peasant children count as free
The lawn that skirts his lordly hall ;
He blandly greets them one and all,
Fair impress on their minds to leave,

Yet rates them lower than his kine,
This courteous Knight of Make-believe.

And `who for alms knock at his door,
Receive a vellum nicely sealed ;
So never seek that mansion more,
They know the State's broad arms and shield ;
And when his eyes grow moist and red,
They feel he only feigns to grieve,
For Nature teaches e'en the brute
To doubt the Knight of Make-believe.

He's always generous in his "set,"
He sips the finest flavored wines,
Too prudent to contract a debt,
His credit's shrunk to narrow lines.
His sole ambition is the hope
Of fawners' plaudits to receive,
Which colors all his selfish aims,
This bounteous Knight of Make-believe.

He baits his hook with Keltic blood
When angling for the Keltic vote,
Yet would he have it understood
His sire sailed in the Pilgrim boat.
His mother, too, were Dutch descent,
If he the Teuton could deceive,
So "liberal" (in his mind) is he,
The truthful Knight of Make-believe.

He wonders why he does not rise
To power and place in public life,

And dreams not that his fair disguise,
 With punctures, rents, and flaws is rife.
 He knows the worth of worthless things,
 Yet never did his mind conceive
 The simple value of a man,—
 We know thee, Knight of Make-believe.

BLOTTED OUT.

HOW changed the scene that then had been
 Not many years ago,
 When from that land supremely grand
 He was obliged to go.
 Then kind friends took him by the hand,
 And bade him think of Fatherland
 And them, when far away,
 And wished him safe conveyance o'er
 The ocean wild to that bright shore,—
 The freeman's home, America;
 And said there, in their misery,
 His name they'd cherish tenderly,
 And never from their memory
 Blot it out.

How changed the scene to exile's een
 When he returned to see
 His country's shore, which years before
 He quit in poverty.

To find his friends in vain he tried ;
"Where are they all?" Echo replied :
"You'll find them in the tomb,
For misery and famine grim
Have thrown their mantles over them,
And buried them in gloom.
Thousands, aye, and millions, too,
The gates of Death have journeyed through,
Whose memory, when lost to view,
Was blotted out.

'Tis changed the scene ; but memory keen
Reveals it to the sight,
And on the past anon doth cast
A placid lustrous light.
He sought the place of sculptured stones, —
The ghostly marks to human bones ;
Of these, the last remains,
Companions of his youthful days,
Who'd joined him often in his plays,
Now freed from joys or pains.
He read the inscriptions cut upon
The grave-stones grim as he went on, —
His father's name he saw on one,
Half blotted out.

This change of scene, a tyrant's spleen
Has wrought throughout the land,
And thralldom's curse made doubly worse
By bigot-despot's hand.
He searched the humble village where
In boyish days he knew no care,

When life appeared a dream,
And found but one who knew him there,
The pedagogue both old and sere,
His face with joy a-beam,
Who warmly clasped his toil-roughed hand,
And said, "Your name (in tone so bland),
Which on my school-roll long did stand,
Is blotted out."

How changed the scene! how-changed in mien,
The master old stood here!
From when in school he plied the rule,
Where pupils did him fear.
"Those whom you used to know," he said,
"Far from their native land are fled,
From slavery and chains."
Then the Exile spake, "'Tis sad to see
A people from their country flee,
While tyranny thus reigns.
When shall our Fatherland be free,
And these foul stains of slavery
From this proud land of bravery
Be blotted out?"

THE OLD YEAR.

THERE is no pleasure in my heart to-night;
My spirits are dejected, and I grieve
For the old friend who is about to leave
The world, and be forever from our sight.

And these are his last hours, his very last;
 He's drawing now the faint and final breath;
 Now cold and dumb, he sleeps the sleep of death,
And what he was belongs unto the past.

He was not of a nation nor a zone,
 And though I'm saddened, others there are pleased
 His exit in, as if from bonds released,
For he was universally well known.

He brought me happy days and tranquil nights,
 And energy, and golden toil, and thought,
 And myriad charms upon my senses wrought,
And filled my bosom with love's sweet delights.

In him did the four seasons take their life,
 And flower, and fruit, and herbage have their growth,
 And all that came and went were his, for both
Hath he escorted, flushed with peace or strife.

The moonlit eves were his, when with my love
 I moved, conversing 'neath the speechless trees,
 Our cadenced accents tuned alike to please,
And thoughts so pure that angels might approve.

True, there were shades that barred from me the sun,
 And death crept in, the death of a dear friend,
 And many cares were mine, but in the end
I bear thee no ill-will for what is done.

So now, Old Year beloved, thou art mute,
 Expired, and cold, as I shall be erelong,
 To lie neglected, low, amid the throng
Of thine and mine, to feed the worm or newt.

FORSAKEN.

HER face was endowered by nature
With beauty that dazzled the sight;
Her form was a marvel of stature,
Her hair was as black as the night.

Her dreamy eyes sweet, in their sockets,
Were blue as the sky, and star bright;
As the sea where it breaks on the rocks its
Waves, her bosom throbbed and was white.

Her garments were flimsy and faded,
Though fast fell the snow-flakes, and thick,
As shivering she wandered, degraded,
In spirits aweary and sick.

'Twas the eve of the birth of the Saviour,
And pondering on that made her brave;
Though forlorn, she felt that the Saviour
Was by her to comfort and save.

She stopped at the door of a palace,
And begged for a shelter till morn,
But its tenant, who drank of the chalice
Of plenty, surveyed in scorn.

"O bar not thy door to the stranger!"
She spoke in a suppliant tone,
"For the sake of the Christ in the manger."
He muttered, "Base woman, begone!"

“Retire to your low institution ;
Corrupt not the air with your breath ;
Your shadow itself is pollution,
Your presence, more loathsome than death !”

Crushed under the weight of the sentence,
He left her alone with her God,
Who wills not the death, but repentance,
Of those who in darkness have trod.

What mockery this virtue that’s grafted
On social gradations to-day !
Will it never be shattered and wafted
From the face of the world away ?

The Word of the Lord is sore slighted,
And “I am more holy than thou !”
Is the creed which the blind and benighted
Are foremost to promulgate now.

TO-DAY.

TO-DAY is the time, if there’s work to do,
That that work should be faithfully done ;
Life cannot count on to-morrow, for you
’T is to-day that the victories are won.

To-day all the battles of life are fought,
And power is broke like a brittle reed ;

On to-day the sceptres of kings are wrought,
And the slave from his bondage is freed.

To-day is an epoch of hopes and fears,
Of love, and hatred, and sin, and strife ;
The most potent day in an age of years,
The time most precious in mortal life.

To-day is the day when storms arise,
And clouds of sorrow on foreheads rest ;
To-day is the time when man should devise,
And should execute all for the best.

WINTER.

YE lovers of creation, Nature's friends,
Who through the year are moved by each new change,
With you I'd roam the Winter season through,
The time so thoughtful, festive, and, withal, so strange ?

The leaves by Autumn dyed in merry tints,
Fall shivering off before the icy breath ;
The trees, grim-naked giants, groan o'erhead,
Like parents o'er their offspring cold in death.

The ground is covered with the stainless snow,
And all things take a shade immaculate ;
The ice-fringed gutters sparkle in the sun,
And door-yard wickets on their hinges grate.

The lakes are prisoned in their icy cells,
The river sleeps beneath the crystal wall,
Whose polished face affords a pastime sweet
To the lithe skater, — beautiful to all.

The iceman's plane that smooths the brittle ice,
With rustic music fills the frosty air ;
The woodman's axe resounds a-through the dale,
Where everything looks barren, brown, and bare.

The out-door laborer, toiling for his bread,
Walks shivering in the burning frost of morn,
Beating his frozen hands against his breast, —
A wretched life is his, despised and lorn.

At home the cheery fires are blazing bright,
And the glad circle forms around the grate,
Where songs are sung, and olden tales are told,
And all is done that can to recreate.

The wind may rage without, the snow may fall,
And window-panes be frosted thickly o'er ;
Some are secure, — I only wish that all
Found peace always within the cottage door.

MEMORY.

GLANCING adown life's gulf of storm and sunshine,
The Lethe of our sight,
We see through memory, clad in robes of splendor,
A vision of delight.

How vivid gleam those shadows in the distance, —
 Spectres that never smile,
 Array of passions, source of soul existence,
 Marshalled in solemn file.

How lucid seem the long-departed faces,
 And forms of cherished friends,
 As memory recreates what time erases,
 And doubly makes amends.

The tranquil hours of youth, the homely pleasures,
 The grief, the care, the pain,
 Well memory in her store-house safely treasures,
 As farmer harvests grain.

Viewed through her glass, how clear's the resurrection :
 Up from their sodden graves,
 Of hates, and loves, that never knew perfection,
 Like unto cliff-dashed waves.

For all th' influence which thou holdest with us,
 Life-long companion true,
 Sun of our noonday, planet of our midnight,
 How much to thee is due !

TRIAL.

A HOST of murmuring voices fill the air,
 A myriad discontented mortals groan,
 Their lot the burden of their graceless prayer,
 Which heavenwards soars in blasphemy's wild moan.

Each selfish mortal deems he suffers most,
And is not slow to wish he ne'er was-born;
Tired of existence, many a soul is lost,
And many a mind which might an age adorn.

Is God unjust, or purblind man ungrate?
God is all goodness, why should man complain?
His sphere is his, himself holds his own fate, —
His destiny, if it be joy or pain.

If cares pursue, 't is well we should be tried,
Lest we forget our littleness on earth.
Trial's the mint where man is purified,
And stamped in grace to meet his second birth.

THE ASTROLOGICAL ASS.

AN OLD FABLE.

IN ancient times, a monarch bent
On pleasure tour, one morning sent
For his astrologer, to say
The weather's prospects for the day.
The gifted man pronounced them bright,
When he departed with delight;
But ere one hour had wandered by,
Thick, murky clouds obscured the sky.

He took no note, his learned sage
Read always right the azure page.
He scarce had ridden ten miles yet,
When on the road a man he met
Astride an ass. The monarch dressed
In hunter's garb, the peasant guessed
Not what he was. So brief and plain,
He said, "Good sire, I fear the rain
Will much obstruct the sport, and so
My counsel is, to homeward go."
To this the monarch paid no heed,
But onward spurred with greater speed.
The clouds to torrents soon gave birth,
Which drenched the hunter and the earth;
His course he changed and hastened home.
When safe beneath the royal dome,
He straight dismissed the astrologer,
And on him showered taunt and slur,
And quick despatched a herald forth
To find that man of greater worth,
The peasant. And the peasant came,
His spirits dulled by fear and shame;
His fears were hushed, and when attired
In courtly suit, the king inquired,
"If he would there consent to tell
How he had learned his art so well."
"This morn," the man, confused, replied,
"Great monarch, ere you I espied,
My beast would cock his ears and bray,
By which I guessed 't would rain to-day."
The monarch's face grew red, then pale:

“Go,” he exclaimed, “and do not fail
This night to bring that ass to me,—
He’s most fit for this vacancy.”
The jackass was that night installed,
And served the king till he was called
From earth away. That king did make
In this one act a grave mistake,
Which filled the world with impudence,—
For donkeys all seek office since.





THE GREAT GRIEF, SEPT. 26, 1881.

“One touch of nature makes the whole world kin.”—*Byron.*

(GARFIELD.)

CONFINED within what shrine
Hath burned the lamp divine,
Through time's existence,
Of sympathy, whose light
Now bursts upon our sight,
Dissolving distance?

What vestal goddess' care
Hath served it unaware
Of mortal payment ;
At this unhallowed hour,
What clothed it with the dower
Of mortal raiment?

Not Cæsar's ill-starred fate,
Nor Cato's, nor the great
Napoleon's ending,
A tithe of this obtained,
Nor sympathy then reigned,
Of Nations blending.

Search annals new and old,
Not pen, nor sword, nor gold,
Sage or magician ;
No man before of earth,
Of what descent or worth,
Inspired such vision.

From each encircling zone,
Thought echoes to our own,
In fellow-feeling.
Grief, with his mailed hand,
Strikes hearts in every land,
Dissension healing.

And wherefore, now? What cause
Such sense to all eyes draws
Of pure perception?
As poet yet, nor prince,
Hath sign nor evidence,
In vague conception,

Why cometh forth of strife,
And passion's burning rife,
The transmutation?
To brotherhood, good-will,
And grief and dole, which fill
Each caste and station.

Make answer, child and man,
Thinker and artisan,
And sect observant,

The light leaps from the gloom,
Which shrouds the silent tomb
Of Freedom's servant.

He held the golden key
To Nature's alchemy,
Which turned transposes,
The barriers in life's road
To stairs to fame's abode,
Whose treads are roses.

For lowly born was he,
Whose death lights sympathy,
Our martyred brother.
Time through shall *Garfield's* name
Illumine the scrolls of fame
With that one *other*.

IN MEMORIAM.

DANIEL J. HARRINGTON, DIED MAY 24, 1882.

OF fair white dreams, mute parent, spirit of death,
From life's crude chaos moulding beauteous shapes,
Hid until then, man's feeble sight beneath,
As nature is in might, till day its face undrapes,

Stand love and friendship perfect, loss and gain,
And grief, travail, ambition, to what end?
And honor, truth, and goodness, are they vain?
Not they; they pulse new life, and bright example lend.

Death's rule is boundless, never taking rest ;
His chariot speeds through space ; not night nor day,
Season nor hour, unknowns him, manifest
In every coign where life is, there exists his sway.

Careless or heedless if his ruthless scythe
Fells in its swath the blade, or sturdier stalk,
The sapling or the forest lord ; his tithe
Is all created form, his course no thing shall balk.

But form alone death taketh more intense
The gems of soul shine forth, and by this light
We count pure aims *sans* malice or pretence,
Up-leading step by step, to manhood's noblest height.

So his I count, my friend's, to whom I bring
My chaplet moist with friendship's crystal tears ;
And while beside his cold grave lingering,
Death's fingers touch the chord of sweet departed years.

Why, ruthless reaper, smitest untimely down ?
Where is no balm to heal thy mortal wound ?
True worth, which might adorn earth's fairest crown,
Whilst barren, worthless weeds luxuriantly abound.

Why, when his will had smoothed the ledgy bars
Confronting youth, and the grim wraiths that rose,
Fell one by one before him, like far stars
Obscured, when day's bright king in full effulgence glows,

Why camest thou, death, so soon to rend apart
The holiest ties of friendship, home, and love ?


Hast thou no nobler guest than heart from heart
To wrench? What forces blind thy secret motives move?

Why takest the good so young, whilst evil man
Rusts out life's chain to dust? Is it because
That those are ripe for heaven in shorter span,
And these must suffer long for violated laws?

Mysterious are thy ways, O God! Thy will
Be done. Thou knowest best. We stand and wait
Content. Thou 'st called him home a place to fill
On high, amid the chosen sainted of Thy state.

IN MEMORIAM.

K. C., DIED OCT. 17, 1879.


 SAD, O peaceful, holy Autumn day!
 To me, death leaning on thy rounded arm,
 Thou camest to bear a jewel soul away,
 Leaving its setting one cold clod of clay,
 Where life late was, and blood flowed rich and warm.

Why didst thou bring the dreaded guest so soon?
 Were there no inns of passage on thy road,
 Whose withered hosts had spent life's afternoon?
 Why come where life's sweet chords were all a-tune,
 Unto this happiest hall of youth's abode?

O fair, yet false October, gathering in
 To thy bare bosom every fallen leaf,

This tender bud why snapp'dst thou in the din
Of countless voices calling thee, akin

To thy discordant music, charged with grief?

Deal gently with her, Nurse, and tenderly

Engird her in thy garments' velvet fold!

All gracious Nature, Oneness, Deity,

In resignation passed she unto Thee,

A spirit sweet and free from dross or mold.

IN MEMORIAM.

THOMAS F. SLYNE, DIED APRIL 17, 1872.

Read before the O. C. L. A.

DEAD is our friend, I should have said our brother,
For mutual as brothers' was our love;
Respect we owe him as we owe no other, —
Respect and sorrow now our feelings move.

When mortals die who held exalted stations,
Whether attained through heritage or worth,
A dismal sadness fills the hearts of nations,
And dolefulness usurps the throne of mirth.

When monarchs die, their lands are draped in mourning;
When tyrants 'neath death's blighting sickle fall,
Subjects can yet be found whose breasts are burning
With deathless hate, to bear the dead one's pall.

Such ceremonies are by might exacted,
Whereat the soul is lost in outward show ;
If honor, virtue, intellect, attracted,
How much more genuine would have been their woe !

These were the magnets which had drawn us to him ;
Held constant as the needle towards the pole ;
Never did falseness, baseness, guile imbue him ;
Virtue and honor filled his bondless soul.

'Tis sad that thus should wilt the flower of promise,
Just blooming forth in intellectual pride ;
And fate should take our friend best cherished from us,
With God in realms eternal to reside.

What mortal was, but rests in mortal dwelling,
The tenement whose walls and roof are clay,
Where friends with untold grief their bosoms swelling,
Will often pause in silence deep to pray.

Let those who knew him steal in sorrow thither,
And lay their offerings on his grave new made ;
Not summer flowers that droop, and fade, and wither,
But garlands of true hearts that never fade.

As chanted is the solemn incantation,
When friends unite to praise and to condole,
Let each one's spirit bend in resignation
Beneath the will of Him, who's all control.

Him though no more we see through mortal vision,
Yet memory limns his features to our mind,
And time will draw the lines with more precision,
Until, as he, we are to dust consigned.

LILLIE.

DIED AUG. 23, 1881.

FOR ever and ever was sorrow,
Sorrow, and care, and dole
Are the furnace-fires that are trying
The wealth of the human soul.

On the river of life lies pleasure,
A ripple, upon its face,
As soon as discovered, departing,
And leaving not sign nor trace.

And often in chasing the phantom,
We heed not the beacon light,
Till judgment is warped, and our reason
Is lost to the Infinite.

And for favors from God we are thankless,
And we count our lucre insane,
Till God's hand rises before us
And scatters our wealth as grain.

And the richest blessings he sends us,
The little lambs pure as snow,
How miser-like do we receive them,
As if nought unto Him we owe.

Till He calls to His heavenly mansion
The little saint-waifs that stray,
And they eagerly answer His summons,
And steal from our midst away.

Going thither, to take our places,
We who should lead them there,
Are laggard, and only may reach them
And God through their constant prayer.

AT S.'S GRAVE.

TO-DAY I knelt beside the open grave
Of one with whom in childhood oft I played ;
Whose coral lips in forfeit games I kissed,
Whose hand-clasp often thrilled me through and through ;
Whose laugh was musical as tinkling rill,
And step elastic as the willow bough ;
And she was fair to look upon, and good ;
The snow clad all the earth so crystal pure,
Yet not as pure as her immortal soul.
And whilst the tears slipped down my cheeks, I mused
Upon the past, up-conjuring the dead ;
Each relative, acquaintance, and old friend,
Until my mind was peopled with a host
Of silent guests ; silent they were, the while
'T would seem there was an ever-present voice
Soft telling me that this was not my home,
Only a wayside inn where I might rest
My weary limbs, before I gird my loins
For the eternal march, which bursts life's bonds,
Quits human shape, and fellowship, and blood.
Then asked I, "When shall my dread summons come ?

And is the document now writ and sealed,
Waiting the courier to deliver it?
And who could tell, who next must go that way,
To which none e'er will answer, only God?"

VERSES.

I.

TRUTH before falsehood was born,
And right before wrong;
Ere poet a garland had worn,
Were singer and song.
And man looked for labor forlorn
His brothers among,
Since time was, and homage and scorn,
The weak move, and strong.

II.

The strong are the filchers of gold
From the sturdy who toil;
The heroes whose labors unfold,
Through thought and turmoil.
The gems that earth's wrinkled palms hold,
The crafty despoil,
Through greed and through precedence bold,
Their brothers they foil.

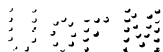
LINES SUGGESTED BY BYRON'S NAPOLEON'S
FAREWELL, 1870.

FAREWELL to thee, France! now thy bright star is
fading;

I've plunged thee in war's dreadful conflict with those
Who with fire and destruction your homes are invading,
The murderous Prussians, your deadliest foes.
The glory thy Martel had showered around thee,
The fame all thy chieftains in battle have won,
Are lost in the darkness, which now doth surround thee;
Its shame will descend from each father and son.

I know that thy people now war with each other;
Dissensions prevail 'mongst thy poor and thy great;
Who now can they find who can handle the rudder,
Since on me they shower the bitterest hate.
In battle their chiefs are unfitted to lead them,
MacMahon lies wounded, — their bravest and best;
France now has not one who is fit to succeed him,
And I am at Wilhelmsloe, under arrest.

A sigh oft escapes me, while here in my prison, —
A sigh for the crown which in Paris I left;
But the voice of the people in wrath hath arisen
In judgment against me, so now I'm bereft
Of all claim to the title which I had usurped,
And all faith in a people whom I did deceive;
They now fight against treason, that fabric corrupt,
Which I on my throne did all secretly weave.



THOU ART BUT DUST.

AMBITIOUS man, why labor every moment,
Taxing thy brain and hand
With more than God intended they should suffer, —
More than thy frame can stand ?

When life is fled, ambition, wealth, and fashion
To you cannot convey
What has been lost in ignoble exertion, —
Man is no more than clay.

What is the king when death the sword is drawing ?
Depart from earth he must,
The impious wretch whose sins his soul are gnawing ;
His equal is in dust.

The soldier brave, the tyrant domineering,
O'er those less strong than he ;
The priest who in the faith of Christ is bearing
Indifferent laity.

Slave, Christian, bigot, fool, and unbeliever,
The good, the bad, the great,
The poor and rich by supreme law established,
Are subject to one fate.

Laid in the grave, by all that live forgotten, —
No, not by every one ;
Some friends remain, the reptiles which do batten
Their putrid flesh upon.

M. H. L.

h

One level to all castes are brought together
 Within the burial-ground ;
 A monument above the rich may tower, —
 The poor's a clayey mound.

The tenants they the difference only knoweth,
 Not in the silent tomb,
 But in that place whereto the spirit goeth,
 Where all new shapes assume.


MINNIE.

NEATH the old willow, with branches all weeping,
 Forever at rest, sweet Minnie lies sleeping ;
 There a ray of the sun every morn comes peeping
 To steal a pure kiss from the lips of the dead.
 All spotless and pure from this world she departed, —
 So early she left us in grief at her loss, —
 Our baby, our only one ! sad, broken-hearted
 We live, while she rests 'neath the shade of the cross.

Her sweet, childish smile with her innocence blending, —
 God's grace from on high upon us is descending,
 While with choirs in heaven her clear voice is blending,
 Chanting hosannas in praise of her God.
 Acceptable spirit ! the Saviour has crowned her ;
 Blest of the Father, and blest of the Lord !
 What worlds of glory and splendor surround her !
 She's gone ; yes, she's gone to receive her reward.

When fastest the cords of affection are twining,
What is not Fortune most strangely designing
To transform our bliss into woeful repining
For those whom we love who are borne from our midst !
But still feel we a joy, though our lives are deserted,
To know that in heaven we'll meet her again.
So we're pleased to accept what could ne'er be averted ;
To meet with blest Minnie will cancel our pain.

A MOTHER'S REASON.

HY should I wish to live, despised and friendless,
A target for the world's poisonous breath?
Is life so dear that I would have it endless,
And never be a victim frail to death?

Hades has pain, and Heaven has joys immortal, —
Thought fearful and felicitous at once.
Who execrate thee, Death, but curse the portal
Through which their souls are destined to advance.

I blame not death nor life, though shadows thicken,
And mists of gloom wind closer round my heart ;
It is the shades we've past that feelings quicken,
The present seldom can a tear-drop start.

The past alone that graves the deep impression,
How soundless deep it's sunken in my mind ;
Fate has denied me favors, and concession
Never made ; her gifts were all unkind.

I used to hope, but hope proved an illusion ;
 So once I loved, but love lies in the grave ;
 What then remains, a union all confusion, —
 Should I not wish that death the bond would clave ?

If I could only toil at honest labor,
 I should be well contented with my lot,
 And feel as independent as my neighbor, —
 But health is shaken now, so I cannot.

My friends upon me turn the coldest shoulder ;
 Contempt reclines on flattery's tinsel chair ;
 I sometimes wish my frame than clay were colder :
 My babe is all that holds my spirit here.

Yes, I will live for her, and with a pleasure,
 Her father's dying words, "Car infant guard." •
 Yes, husband, I will guard our priceless treasure,
 And trust in God my sufferings to reward.

Why I should wish to live, — this is the reason,
 Though traps and snares beneath my feet be spread ;
 I'll patient wait for God's appointed season,
 And fearless then will go to join the dead.

LINES IN AN ALBUM.

THE bonds of friendship are of such a kind
 That bound in virtue nothing can unbind.

THE DYING MOTHER TO HER SON.

APPROACH, my boy; give me your hand,
And hear my parting words to thee;
For now I near the shadowy land,
Eternity.

No hoarded wealth I leave behind;
My path was not by fortune crossed;
But cares and troubles sore of mind,
My life engrossed:

What unto me were gold to-day,
What will it be at death to you,
When all that's earthly fades away
Like morning dew?

Not gold I'd leave, but council good,—
To you I gave a mother's care,
And in your life's solicitude
I, too, would share.

Your years are few, your mind is weak,
And little things a change effect,
And life has many a shallow creek
Where souls are wreck't.

'Tis futile, when the soul is toss't
On raging seas of sin and strife,
To dream to live the pleasures lost,
Again in Life.

Let virtue keep your heart snow-white,
Your actions all let honor guide,
And youthwards at life's closing night
You'll look with pride.

For if in God you place your trust,
And I would have you place it there,
You hoard a store 'gainst moth and rust,
Secure fore'er.

And He will meet you at the gate
That I am surely nearing now,
Where angels will compliant wait,
To crown your brow.

IN THE DRIFT.

BREASTING forever the billows of time,
Backward and forward borne,
Through scenes of good forever, and scenes of crime,
Now in a zone of love, and now in a clime,
Where the soul is with anguish torn.

Here is the grace and beauty of God,
There is Apollyon hall,
Here is the saint blue-scourged with the rod,
And there the thief at whose beck and nod
The toiler is nailed to the wall.

Here is the rose in the garden of life,
And the thorny weed by its side ;
Here is the husband base, and there is the wife,
Pure as a moonbeam, wedging the stolid strife
Bravely, but it will never divide.

FAREWELL.

A LOVER, with his loved one fair conversing,
When but a moment left his love to tell,
Words and scenes of other days rehearsing,
E'en while the gloom that hovers o'er him is dispersing,
Has scarce the power to say the omened word,
"Farewell."

A wealth of strength should be possessed to speak
This word, in tone so sweet and simple seeming,
For of its sounds the bliss of lovers break,
'T is like unto a ship at sea a-leak, —
With dole and sorrow unto those concerned teeming.

'T is sadder still in manhood, when we say
The word to kindred, home, and friends forever ;
Father, mother, brothers, sisters, they
Who taught us right and tuned our lips to pray,
And warned us from God our course to turn never.

But when with life we are compelled to part,
Untimely, when for crime we are repenting,
'T is then the word gnaws fiercest at the heart,
And makes us with such agony to start
At the approach of death in solitude relenting.

W. J. C., 1872.

YOU may stamp out my life, but you kill me not;
There is no death for the things that live;
The hand and the heart may be still, but the germ of
thought,
And the force that issues from death, arise to live and
to thrive.

The strength of my will shall be felt,—how should it be
else,
When guided by reason and sense, command these
respect,
Purposely given to man, by God, to that end. Why not?
They usher us into the midst of the great, the elect.

And who are the great? Are they such as gawkishly
strut
World through, well clad and gloved, gaping or aping a
fool,

Those locusts worse than a plague, and much worse than
a curse,
Or these that sweat at the brow, and handle the artisan
tool?

Pauperly poor I may be, but poverty is n't a crime ;
The ill-bred may reckon it so, what is it to me ?
Gold gilds the fore-face of sin ; 't is all very well ;
The crime, the vice, and the lust, through the lacquer I
see.

The result inspection won't bear, rottenness built upon
lewd
Entrails foul-choked with mud, the physic of sin and
shame ;
Murder without the womb, and twofold murder within,
By passion and fashion duped, what but these are to
blame ?

Bury your scruples in chaff, still the winds whilst you may,
The wind is certain to blow, and scrupulous conscience
groan,
And, self-condemned, you stand, or stagger, or fall,
And grab for the hand of God when all is flying or
flown.

Paint, and powder, and lace, relics of savage art,
Stockings stuffed at the calf, hair from the bamboo
bark,
Mortised and tenoned together, with lacings and pins,
Doesn't the creature merit a passing remark ?

Is woman a fool? or is man an ass or a dolt?

I feel for those clowns enamored of beautiful belles,
Whose virtue has often been sold, but nobody cares or
knows,

Or they feel the power of gold, so nobody tells.

Or jewels they wear; what are they but putty and paste?

Rubbish and filth like themselves in heart and in soul,
Brilliant under a gas-jet, sweeter to see than to taste, —
And man is moved by these *things*, with minds both
cranky and shoal!

I am poor, but, said you so, I would smile in your face;

I have health, this is enough, and God is my aid.

I envy not moths of wealth, I'm content with my kind;

She whom I love is a woman, not a cosmetic or jade.

My love is a river which widens on as it goes;

Hers an ocean growing no greater nor less;

Boundless unbound, and pure as December's snows.

Not gold, but a wife I marry, to cherish in luck or
distress.

Others may cavil and sneer; if I win, 'tis sufficient, I win;

The earth may dive through the sun, and the moon
decay;

I heed not; the light of God is the mightiest light,

And the light of love will illumine my darkest day.

FREEDOM.

GODDESS fair! adored of youth,
Sweetly sung of Singer gifted,
Praised by every tongue of truth,
Art thou, who our age uplifted.

Sceptred, throned, supreme, alone,
Reignest for thought the pure idea ;
Weakly shrinking from the sun
At first, betimes to rise and be a

Very bastion in thy strength,
Impregnable to blood or iron,
With nought of bulk, or breadth, or length,
Presented for thy foes to fire on.

What mind up-conjured thee from thought?
What process vague of evolution,
Produced from slave-dregs leaven fraught
With what makes holy revolution?

We see behind our golden day
The stake and hear the faggots crackle,
When Reason dungeoned, pined away,
Down-loaded with the chain and shackle.

When might made right, and God's coin, man,
Was filched from God by feudal scoffers,
And whoso could the earth o'erran
For commerce such, to fill their coffers.

Within the smithy grim of Time,
Ambition's slaves Greed's bellows blowing,
Serf sledge-blows clink on anvil chime
Before the forge of Terror glowing.

There, cutlass, lance, and catapult,
Spear, cannon, battle-axe, and rifle,
And tools, which serve for one result
Were shaped,—man's rights to curb and stifle.

One eve a worker worn of toil
Thus whispered to his brother-toilers :
“Are we not they who forge the coil
That holds us bondmen to despoilers?”

“Aye, aye!” they answered, every one,
“Grim tyranny hath our assistance.”
And each his armor buckled on,
Prepared to offer wrong resistance.

Who welds the tool best knows its worth ;
Who moulds the thought, its application ;
With palm to hilt each *Man* went forth
To carve through thought a new creation.

But slavery, serfdom, impotence,
Their footsteps stayed, where'er they wended,
And king-craft, throned on ignorance,
Its bolts upon their shields expended.

Till one by one each gilded god,
With feet of clay, was fallen, crumbled.
And every satrap felt the rod,
And crouched before his equal, humbled.

And well our age, — our nation knows
How great the loss of blood and treasure,
Expent in effort to depose
The baron horde who ruled at pleasure.

But they are gone, and in their stead
Our day beholds fair Freedom seated,
With hand outstretched to bless the race
Who well their fathers' work completed.

A FANCY.

DID Raphael in his glory live,
And had he seen thy face,
Its image canvas would receive,
'T would lend his art true grace.

For Psyche's statue thou might'st stand,
Thou art o'er all supreme,
In mien thou'rt beautiful beyond
The greatest artist's dream.

Thy beaming eyes of azure hue,
Which speak so calmly bright,

Confirm thee, of the mortals few,
Whose presence is delight.

Thy teeth like rows of pearls, white,
And lips the coral dye,
Thy voice so sweet, and heart so light,
With Venus thou might'st vie.

What danger might not mortal dare,
For virtues such as thine,
If in the end such prize he'd bear
As sure thou art, divine.

CAMPBELL.

"I believe when I am gone justice will be done to me in this way, that I was a pure writer."—*Thomas Campbell, in his old age.*

LET Scotia's sons thy praises sing,
And let her daughters fair
New honors and new laurels bring,
To crown thy grave with every Spring,
And o'er it shed a tear.

The pleasure of thy dying day
Is more than realized,
A Poet pure, all peoples say
Thou wert, and to the judgment day
Thy merit will be prized.

PSEUDO-CRITICS.

YOU are not of my plain way of thinking, of course,
And your brute sense could never a venture endorse
Which appealed not to self, and to passion, and kind,
And you'll walk in the ways of the halt and the blind,
With your cynical smile, and your jest, and your jeer,
And your censure of talent, or genius, whene'er
It outsteps the cramped chime of your measure of taste, —
Your universe girdled by scissors and paste.
Allow, it's your duty, your pleasure, your gain,
To charge with your goose-quill quixotic, insane,
Admit that you ought to be mogul or seer, —
Can you fathom all depths, — does it ever appear
That the critic is often a fool for his pains;
And his work shows the maggot that feeds on his brains,
And his board and his lodging and *perfumed* cigar
Keep his pencil and judgment forever at war?
Bohemian, of course, you've a right to your say.
You I envy not; feather, good luck, and good day!

